

No. 8 Badgers post 4th shutout in 38-0 win over Spartans

MADISON, Wis. -- Michigan State coach Mark Dantonio said he knew the Spartans were going to have to stop Jonathan Taylor if they were going to have any shot at stealing a win at No. 8 Wisconsin on Saturday.

The Spartans' defense limited Taylor to just 80 yards on 26 carries, marking the first time this season the Heisman Trophy hopeful was held under 100.

But Michigan State was held to 149 yards, 30 rushing, and couldn't find any rhythm as the Spartans fell to the Badgers 38-0.

"This is collectively a group of people who didn't succeed, coaches, players, and I'm not going to stand here and blame the players," Dantonio said. "I'm not going to do that."

The Badgers dominated time of possession 39:10 to 20:50, Taylor rushed for two touchdowns and Wisconsin's defense posted its fourth shutout of the season.

"I said it last week, those guys are playing lights out. I don't have any other words. They're No. 1 in the nation," Taylor said of his defensive teammates.

Jack Coan completed his first seven passes for Wisconsin (6-0, 3-0 Big Ten) and finished 18 of 21 for 180 yards and a touchdown to win his eighth straight start since last season.

The Spartans (4-3, 2-2) lost back-to-back games against AP top-10 Big Ten opponents. Michigan State lost at then-No. 4 Ohio State 34-10 last week.

"Nothing really good happened for us," Dantonio said. "I don't think we quit. I don't think that happened. It was 17-zip at half and 17-zip into the third quarter but we never really got anything going until the end of the game."

The Spartans had just seven first downs and were 2 for 14 on third down.

Brian Lewerke was 7 of 16 for 53 yards and an interception and sacked twice before getting pulled in the fourth quarter for backup Rocky Lombardi. Lombardi went 5 for 14 for 66 yards and was picked off by Rachad Wildgoose in the end zone late in the fourth quarter to preserve the shutout for Wisconsin's top-ranked defense.

"It was very important. We take pride in that," Wisconsin inside linebacker Chris Orr said. "I feel like it just shows everybody how dominant our defense is. Whenever you can shut out anybody, it's obviously a dominant display on defense. We take pride in that, for real."

The Badgers last had four shutouts in 1930, when they had five. Wisconsin did not score a touchdown on its opening drive for the first time this season. Taylor had scored touchdowns on the Badgers' opening possession in five straight games.

Taylor scored from a yard out, Coan threw a 19-yard touchdown to Quintez Cephus and Collin Larsh kicked a 29-yard field goal to put the Badgers ahead 17-0 at the half.

Michigan State had the ball for less than 7 minutes in the first half and managed just one first down and 38 total yards the first two quarters.

"I thought we'd be able to run a little more effectively. But I also thought we'd be able to throw a little more effectively," Dantonio said. "You figure something's going to work, but you got to execute, too."

The Spartans got a little momentum when Tyriq Thompson ran for 20 yards and a first down on a fake punt on Michigan State's first drive of the second half. But back-to-back sacks by Orr and Isaiahh Loudermilk forced yet another Spartans punt.

Taylor opened the fourth with his second touchdown, a 1-yarder than made it 24-0.

Zack Baun picked off Lewerke and returned it 34 yards for a fourth-quarter touchdown. The score marked the fourth by the Badgers' defense this season. The unit has only allowed four touchdowns all year.

"The pick-six came from preparation, really," Baun said. "A lot of work in the film room and understanding the route concepts. They had a bust to bunch to the field and two split out to the boundary. We know that in that formation, they like to run double slants and I dropped and entered the zone and he threw it right to me." Kendrick Pryor scored the final touchdown on a 66-yard run. Michigan State's Darrell Stewart Jr., the Big Ten's leading receiver, had five catches for 59 yards.

THE TAKEAWAY

Michigan State: The Spartans were completely overmatched offensively, defensively and on special teams. Dantonio's group has to hit the reset button during its bye week after getting outscored 72-10 against two of the top teams in the Big Ten.

"We just have to pick ourselves up, confidence-wise," defensive tackle Raequan Williams said. "Everyone's questioning themselves. But we've got a bye week this week. It's a good time, definitely."

Wisconsin: The Badgers padded their resume with another dominant performance. With the win, Wisconsin is bowl eligible for the 18th consecutive season. The Badgers' run of 17 straight bowl games is the longest streak in the Big Ten and is tied with Boise State for fifth nationally.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Wisconsin should move up. Its defense backed up its No. 1 national ranking. After a game at Illinois, the Badgers go to Columbus for a showdown with Ohio State in a likely meeting of unbeatens.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
MSU	0	0	0	0	0
WIS	7	10	0	21	38

Scoring Summary -----

	MSU	WIS
FIRST QUARTER		
WIS TD 5:00 Jonathan Taylor 1 Yd Run (Collin Larsh Kick)		
11 plays, 75 yards, 6:16	0	7
SECOND QUARTER		
WIS TD 14:54 Quintez Cephus 19 Yd pass from Jack Coan (Collin Larsh Kick)		
8 plays, 75 yards, 4:17	0	14
WIS FG 4:30 Collin Larsh 29 Yd Field Goal		
14 plays, 52 yards, 7:34	0	17
FOURTH QUARTER		
WIS TD 13:38 Jonathan Taylor 1 Yd Run (Collin Larsh Kick)		
15 plays, 92 yards, 8:46	0	24
WIS TD 12:52 Zack Baun 34 Yd Interception Return (Collin Larsh Kick)		
3 plays, 5 yards, 0:46	0	31
WIS TD 10:52 Kendrick Pryor 66 Yd Run (Collin Larsh Kick)		
1 play, 66 yards, 0:12	0	38

Team Stats	MSU	WIS
First Downs	7	22
Passes for First	4	10
Rushes for First	3	10
Penalties for First	0	2
Third Down Efficiency	2-14	6-13
Fourth Down Efficiency	2-2	2-2
Total Yards	149	402
Total Plays	51	67
Avg Gain Per Play	2.9	6.0
Net Yards Rushing	30	222
Rushes	21	46
Yards Per Rush	1.4	4.8
Net Yards Passing	119	180
Comp-Att	12-30	18-21
Yards Per Pass	4.0	8.6
Times Sacked	2	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-12	-7
Interceptions	2	0
Punts	9	4
Punt Average	43.1	34.5
Penalties	5	1
Penalty Yards	40	10
Fumbles	2	2
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Time of Poss	20:50	39:10

Individual Stats

RUSHING							
MICHIGAN ST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Tyriq Thompson	1	20	20.0	0	20		
Elijah Collins	8	16	2.0	0	6		
Brian Lewerke	8	4	0.5	0	6		
Cody White	1	0	0.0	0	0		
Rocky Lombardi	2	-5	-2.5	0	3		
Darrell Stewart Jr.	1	-5	-5.0	0	0		
WISCONSIN	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Jonathan Taylor	26	80	3.1	2	13		
Kendric Pryor	1	66	66.0	1	66		
Nakia Watson	5	34	6.8	0	19		
Aron Cruickshank	2	28	14.0	0	23		
John Chenal	4	17	4.3	0	9		
Garrett Groshek	2	7	3.5	0	4		
Bradrick Shaw	3	6	2.0	0	5		
Team	1	-1	-1.0	0	0		
Jack Coan	2	-15	-7.5	0	0		
PASSING							
MICHIGAN ST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Rocky Lombardi	5	14	66	4.7	0	1	7.1
Brian Lewerke	7	16	53	3.3	0	1	8.3
WISCONSIN	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Jack Coan	18	21	180	8.6	1	0	95.2
RECEIVING							
MICHIGAN ST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Darrell Stewart Jr.	5	59	11.8	0	18		
Cody White	3	34	11.3	0	19		
Matt Seybert	2	15	7.5	0	8		
C.J. Hayes	2	11	5.5	0	6		
WISCONSIN	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Jake Ferguson	4	62	15.5	0	27		
Danny Davis III	4	33	8.3	0	12		
Quintez Cephus	2	28	14.0	1	19		
Jonathan Taylor	3	22	7.3	0	9		
Kendric Pryor	1	18	18.0	0	18		
A.J. Taylor	1	10	10.0	0	10		
Garrett Groshek	2	6	3.0	0	3		
John Chenal	1	1	1.0	0	1		