

RED BOX BOWL
MICHIGAN STATE VS OREGON

Herbert sparks Oregon past Michigan State 7-6 in Redbox Bowl

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- Justin Herbert did just enough to keep his streak intact for consecutive games with a touchdown pass. Make it an impressive 28 and counting for Oregon's quarterback, the longest active streak in the nation among FBS schools.

That it turned out to be the Ducks lone score in their 7-6 win over Michigan State in the Redbox Bowl only emphasized why coach Mario Cristobal was smiling after Herbert's decision earlier this month to bypass the NFL draft.

Herbert shook off a sluggish day and threw a 28-yard touchdown pass to Dillon Mitchell in the fourth quarter, and Oregon held on after Michigan State botched a field goal attempt for a 7-6 victory in the Redbox Bowl on Monday.

"We felt like it was going to be that kind of game just watching them on defense," Cristobal said. "We kept battling and battling. You take a victory whether it be one point, two points or 50 points. These guys found a way to get it done."

Herbert passed for 166 yards and extended his streak on a day when the Ducks' offense mostly sputtered.

"We kind of just shot ourselves in the foot the first few drives, and guys kind of settled down and making plays," Herbert said.

Oregon (9-4) crossed midfield only three times and couldn't get into the end zone until Herbert found Mitchell in the right front of the end zone for the deciding score. The Ducks' defense held up from there but got some help from Michigan State's special teams.

The Spartans were lined up for a 50-yard field goal attempt when quarterback Brian Lewerke, who doubles as the holder, bobbled the snap, then attempted to run before hurriedly throwing an incomple-tion near the sideline.

"It's one that I have to come up with," Lewerke said. "The ball kind of hit my hand on top of the ball. I tried to make something happen. That's what happens."

After Michigan State's defense forced a three-and-out on the fol-lowing possession, the Spartans took over at their own 42, but Lewerke's long pass on 4th-and-12 was knocked down by Oregon cor-nerback Thomas Graham.

Lewerke completed 22 of 40 passes for 172 yards with one intercep-tion. It's the third time in four games that Michigan State (7-6) has failed to score a touchdown.

Running back LJ Scott ran for 84 yards on 24 carries, ending his injury-riddled season with the Spartans on a high note after being limited to five games. The senior running back declined to redshirt this year and declared for the NFL draft in early December.

Matt Goghlin kicked a pair of 34-yard field goals but he also missed one from 50.

"We never got that bust-out play," Michigan State coach Mark Dantonio said. "You're not going to win many games scoring six points."

It was Oregon's first bowl victory since beating Florida State in the 2015 Rose Bowl.

THE TAKEAWAY

Michigan State: The Spartans had more than enough on defense but as has been the case all season, the offense simply couldn't hold up its end of the bargain. Lewerke tried to get the passing game going and took several deep shots, but it was his scrambling that was most effective. The memory of the mistake on the field goal try in the fourth quarter will linger, but the Spartans' inability to get a sustained attack on offense was what ultimately did in Dantonio's team.

Oregon: Getting Cristobal a bowl win in his first season was big and should be a nice lift for the Ducks program. That they won when their offense was held to 25 points below its scoring average is also big. The victory is Oregon's third straight, which should build some momentum heading into the offseason.

DON'T GO HOME WITHOUT IT

Cristobal was forced to stop celebrating his team's win over Mich-igan State in the Redbox Bowl when he noticed that his left hand was bare. That started a frantic search that ultimately was un-successful -- almost. "This is embarrassing," Cristobal said with a smile. "I thought I lost my wedding ring. It was in the locker room the whole time."

MITCHELL'S RECORD

Mitchell got off to a slow start before breaking out in the second half and finished with six catches for 70 yards. That was enough to set Oregon single-season record with 1,184 receiving yards. Josh Huff set the previous record of 1,140 yards in 2013.

"It was a goal of mine once it was brought to my attention," Mitch-ell said. "But I don't really think about it like that. I enjoyed the win more than anything."

WILLEKES BREAKS LEG

Michigan State played most of the second half without defensive end Kenny Willekes, who suffered a broken left fibula in the third quarter. Willekes led the Spartans with 8 1/2 sacks this season.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
MSU	0	0	6	0	6
ORE	0	0	0	7	7

Scoring Summary -----

	MSU	ORE
third Quarter		
MSU FG 9:57 Matt Coghlin 34 Yd Field Goal		
12 plays, 64 yards, 5:03	3	0
MSU FG 1:17 Matt Coghlin 34 Yd Field Goal		
8 plays, 31 yards, 3:30	6	0
fourth Quarter	MSU	ORE
ORE TD 11:19 Dillon Mitchell 28 Yd pass from Justin Herbert (Adam Stack Kick)6 plays, 77 yards, 1:40	6	7

Team Stats	MSU	ORE
First Downs	19	11
Total Yards	331	203
Total Plays	86	60
Avg Gain Per Play	3.8	3.4
Net Yards Rushing	159	37
Rushes	46	27
Yards Per Rush	3.5	1.4
Net Yards Passing	172	166
Comp-Att	22-40	19-33
Yards Per Pass	4.3	5.0
Times Sacked	3	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-20	-21
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	7	11
Punt Average	43.1	38.6
Penalties	5	2
Penalty Yards	35	15
Fumbles	3	1
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	37:15	22:45

Individual Stats

RUSHING

MSU	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
3 LJ Scott	24	84	3.5	14	0
14 Brian Lewerke	16	63	3.9	25	0
11 Connor Heyward	4	9	2.3	3	0
8 Jalen Nailor	1	3	3.0	3	0
25 Darrell Stewart Jr. 1	0	0.0	0	0	0
ORE	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
34 CJ Verdell	14	43	3.1	16	0
26 Travis Dye	6	18	3.0	6	0
42 Blake Maimone	1	-7	-7.0	0	0
10 Justin Herbert	4	-7	-1.8	7	0

PASSING

MSU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
14 Brian Lewerke	22	40	172	4.3	0	1	86.1
ORE	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
10 Justin Herbert	19	33	166	5.0	1	0	109.8

RECEIVING

MSU	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
7 Cody White	6	64	10.7	15	0
Darrell Stewart Jr.	9	45	5.0	10	0
89 Matt Dotson	2	27	13.5	17	0
8 Jalen Nailor	1	26	26.0	26	0
81 Matt Sokol	1	10	10.0	10	0
3 LJ Scott	3	0	0.0	2	0
ORE	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
13 Dillon Mitchell	6	70	11.7	28	1
30 Jaylon Redd	7	65	9.3	18	0
27 Jacob Breeland	2	26	13.0	21	0
3 Johnny Johnson III	1	10	10.0	10	0
34 CJ Verdell	2	3	1.5	2	0
26 Travis Dye	1	-8	-8.0	0	0