

**WEEK SIX  
NORTHWESTERN AT MICHIGAN STATE**

EAST LANSING, Mich. -- Clayton Thorson threw for 373 yards and three touchdowns and Northwestern recovered from another second-half slip to beat No. 20 Michigan State 29-19 on Saturday.

The Spartans (3-2, 1-1 Big Ten) entered with the nation's top-ranked run defense and held Northwestern (2-3, 2-1) to 8 yards on the ground, but it didn't matter. The Wildcats moved the ball consistently well through the air, and Michigan State's offense was mostly inept except for a brief stretch in the third quarter.

Thorson threw a 21-yard scoring pass to Cameron Green with 15 seconds left in the third, and a 2-point conversion gave Northwestern a 22-19 lead.

The Wildcats missed a field goal with 6:41 to play, but Michigan State went 15 yards backward on the ensuing possession and had to punt. The Spartans held again defensively, and on the next possession, they had second-and-1 from their own 11. After two near-sacks, running back Connor Heyward was stopped on fourth down. Thorson scored on a 2-yard run to make it a 10-point game with 2:51 left.

"We'll find the answers. I feel pretty confident in that," Michigan State coach Mark Dantonio said. "We'll right the ship."

The Spartans took advantage of a first-quarter interception and led 3-0, but Thorson connected with Kyric McGowan for a 77-yard touchdown with 18 seconds left in the period. Thorson found JJ Jefferson for a 34-yard TD in the second, and Northwestern led 14-6 at halftime.

The Wildcats blew a 21-3 halftime lead in a loss to Akron and were up 17-0 in the first half in last weekend's loss to Michigan. They also gave away the lead against Michigan State in a quick sequence during the third quarter.

Felton Davis scored for the Spartans on a 48-yard reverse, and although a 2-point conversion attempt failed, Michigan State got the ball back on an interception and took a 19-14 lead on Brian Lewerke's 3-yard touchdown pass to Davis.

Northwestern recovered, however, and won on a day when the Wildcats clearly looked like the better team.

"We lost some momentum there in the third quarter and we were able to seize it back," Northwestern coach Pat Fitzgerald said. "We've been really close the last three weeks and to come in here against an outstanding football team and get the win, I'm incredibly proud of our guys."

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Northwestern: The Wildcats came close last weekend against Michigan and fully deserved this win. Northwestern had the right plan, throwing 47 passes against a Michigan State team that excels at stopping the run, and the Wildcats also were impressive defensively in the final quarter.

Michigan State: With plenty of returning starters from a team that won 10 games a season ago, the Spartans have been a disappointment so far. They've had injuries -- running back LJ Scott and receiver Cody White were out Saturday -- and both the offensive line and secondary now seem like real problems.

**POLL IMPLICATIONS**

It's hard to see Michigan State staying in the Top 25 after this double-digit loss at home.

<b>Final</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>NW</b>	7	7	8	7	29
<b>MSU</b>	3	3	13	0	19

**Scoring Summary -----**

	<b>NW</b>	<b>MSU</b>
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
<b>MSU</b> FG 0:59		
Matt Coghlin 27 Yd Field Goal		
9 plays, 30 yards, 4:32	0	3
<b>NW</b> TD 0:18		
Kyric McGowan 77 Yd pass from Clayton Thorson (Charlie Kuhbander Kick)		
2 plays, 75 yards, 0:41	7	3
<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>		
<b>NW</b> TD 13:58		
JJ Jefferson 34 Yd pass from Clayton Thorson (Charlie Kuhbander Kick)		
2 plays, 51 yards, 0:39	14	3
<b>MSU</b> FG 2:50		
Matt Coghlin 25 Yd Field Goal		
10 plays, 60 yards, 4:19	14	6
<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>		
<b>MSU</b> TD 7:18		
Felton Davis III 48 Yd Run (Two-Point Pass Conversion Failed)		
4 plays, 80 yards, 1:21	14	12
<b>MSU</b> TD 4:08		
Felton Davis III 3 Yd pass from Brian Lewerke (Matt Coghlin Kick)		
6 plays, 33 yards, 2:31	14	19
<b>NW</b> TD 0:15		
Cameron Green 21 Yd pass from Clayton Thorson (Clayton Thorson Pass to Solomon Vault for Two-Point Conversion)		
9 plays, 75 yards, 3:53	22	19
<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>		
<b>NW</b> TD 2:51		
Clayton Thorson 2 Yd Run (Charlie Kuhbander Kick)		
3 plays, 11 yards, 0:18	29	19

<b>Team Stats</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>MSU</b>
First Downs	19	22
Total Yards	381	425
Total Plays	67	76
Avg Gain Per Play	5.7	5.6
Net Yards Rushing	8	96
Rushes	20	24
Yards Per Rush	0.4	4.0
Net Yards Passing	373	329
Comp-Att	31-47	31-52
Yards Per Pass	7.9	6.3
Times Sacked	1	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	-12	-12
Interceptions	2	1
Punts	6	7
Punt Average	43.8	40.9
Penalties	3	5
Penalty Yards	35	49
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	26:19	33:41

**Individual Stats**

**RUSHING**

	<b>Rush</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Long</b>
<b>NW</b>					
Drake Anderson	5	12	2.4	0	11
Solomon Vault	10	6	0.6	0	5
Team	2	-2	-1.0	0	0
Clayton Thorson	3	-8	-2.7	1	2
<b>MSU</b>					
Felton Davis III	2	50	25.0	1	48
La'Darius Jefferson	6	15	2.5	0	9
Connor Heyward	5	12	2.4	0	9
Brian Lewerke	7	11	1.6	0	10
Alante Thomas	1	6	6.0	0	6
Laress Nelson	2	2	1.0	0	3
Weston Bridges	1	0	0.0	0	0

**PASSING**

	<b>Comp</b>	<b>Att</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Y/A</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Int</b>	<b>QBRat</b>
<b>NW</b>							
Clayton Thorson	31	47	373	7.9	3	2	69.6
<b>MSU</b>							
Brian Lewerke	31	51	329	6.5	1	1	38.4
Team	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--

**RECEIVING**

	<b>Rec</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Long</b>
<b>NW</b>					
Flynn Nagel	10	111	11.1	0	18
Kyric McGowan	1	77	77.0	1	77
Cameron Green	9	76	8.4	1	21
Bennett Skowronek	5	60	12.0	0	29
JJ Jefferson	2	38	19.0	1	34
Riley Lees	2	10	5.0	0	9
Solomon Vault	1	4	4.0	0	4
John Moten IV	1	-3	-3.0	0	0
<b>MSU</b>					
Felton Davis III	7	96	13.7	1	26
Cam Chambers	5	82	16.4	0	27
Brandon Sowards	3	59	19.7	0	23
Connor Heyward	7	30	4.3	0	15
Matt Dotson	2	18	9.0	0	9
Darrell Stewart Jr.	1	15	15.0	0	15
Matt Sokol	2	14	7.0	0	9
C.J. Hayes	1	13	13.0	0	13
La'Darius Jefferson	2	8	4.0	0	8
Alante Thomas	1	-6	-6.0	0	0