



**PENN STATE**  
vs.  
**MICHIGAN STATE**



**GAME INFO**

**Time:** 3:30 p.m. Saturday  
**Place:** Spartan Stadium  
**TV:** ABC/ESPN

**TEAM FACTS**

**Head Coaches**

**PSU:** Joe Paterno (44th year, 392-129-3)  
**MSU:** Mark Dantonio (3rd year, 40-32 overall)

**2009 Records**

**PSU:** 9-2 (5-2 Big Ten)  
**MSU:** 6-5 (4-3)

**Bowl Records**

**PSU:** 26-13-2  
**MSU:** 7-12

**Series History**

**Last Meeting:** 2008, PSU 49-18  
**Record:** PSU leads 13-12-1

**In the NFL**

**PSU:** San Francisco 49ers  
RB Michael Robinson  
**MSU:** Dallas Cowboys OT Flozell Adams

**PSU INJURIES**

**Out:**  
RB B. Beachum (knee)  
LB Michael Mauti (knee)  
DE Pete Massaro (knee)  
WR Chaz Powell (shoulder)  
**Possible:**  
CB A.J. Wallace (shoulder)

**STATISTICS**

**Penn State**

**Passing:** Darryll Clark  
2,477 yards, 19 TDs, 10 INTs  
**Rushing:** Evan Royster  
990 yards, 6 TDs  
**Receiving:** Derek Moye  
41 catches, 676 yards, 5 TDs  
**Graham Zug**  
38 catches, 460 yards, 5 TDs  
**Tackles:** Josh Hull, 103  
**Sacks:** Jared Odrick, 6  
**INTs:** A.J. Wallace, Navorro Bowman and Josh Hull, 2

**Michigan State**

**Passing:** Kirk Cousins  
2,305 yards, 17 TDs, 5 INTs  
**Rushing:** Larry Caper  
411 yards, 6 TDs  
**Receiving:** Blair White  
61 catches, 854 yards, 8 TDs  
**Tackles:** Greg Jones, 126  
**Sacks:** Greg Jones, 7.5  
**INTs:** 5 tied with 1

**ON THE WEB**

For complete post-game coverage from East Lansing, Mich.:  
**ONLINE** [psucollegian.com](http://psucollegian.com)

**FOOTBLOG**

Visit the staff's blog at [psucollegian.com/blogs/football](http://psucollegian.com/blogs/football) for live updates from the game and extra stories throughout the week.

**TWITTER**

Follow the Collegian's football staff at [twitter.com/psufootball](https://twitter.com/psufootball) for updates throughout the weekend.

**VIDEOS**

Check the Collegian's Web site for the football staff's on-location pregame video, as well as a wrap-up video following the game.

**LAST GAME EDITION**

# AN AT-LARGE BCS BID REMAINS POSSIBLE, BUT STANDING IN THE WAY... IS THIS MAN

By Nate Mink  
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Penn State is down to its last chance to prove it belongs among college football's best.

Bowl Championship Series (BCS) aspirations are on the line at Spartan Stadium, and the Nittany Lions hope they learned enough from their two defeats in marquee games to keep their season from being a disappointment.

East Lansing, Mich., has been a tough place for the Lions since they joined the Big Ten in 1993, as they've won four of eight meetings. Six of those eight games have been decided by single digits.

Most recently, the Lions blew a 17-point second-half lead and possible Outback Bowl bid in 2007, instead landing in the Alamo Bowl after a 35-31 loss to Michigan State.

"It was demoralizing," senior linebacker Sean Lee said of that loss. "It's never fun to go on break on Thanksgiving with a loss and with a bad taste in your mouth. You're thinking about it all break instead of being excited to get into bowl practice. You want to leave on a high note."

Saturday, the BCS is what is at stake, and the Outback Bowl would be the disappointment.

"It's huge," said junior linebacker Navorro Bowman, who did not travel to Michigan State in 2007 because of his role in an on-campus fight. "It's a game to send our seniors out on the top once again. It can help us out with the postseason."

"I'm about winning. Any time we play, whether it's the first game of the year or the last game of the year, I wanna win."

By Bowman's standards, two games have been let-downs — Sept. 26 against Iowa and Nov. 7 against Ohio State.

In Penn State's only two losses this season, the Hawkeyes and Buckeyes out-muscled the Lions' offensive line, taking away the run game and disrupting the timing of the passing game.

"We just learned that you really got to be at your best offensively, in terms of execution, if you're going against a good defense," center Stefan Wisniewski said. "Iowa and Ohio State were the best defenses we faced, and we made mistakes in those games in execution that you can't afford to make against those teams."

But the Spartans' defense is not in the same class as Iowa's or Ohio State's.

Michigan State's secondary has given up an average of 260 passing yards in seven Big Ten games this season, which bodes well for quarterback Darryll Clark, who leads the conference in touchdown passes with 19 and is 12-0 as a starter when he does not throw an interception.

Where the Spartans have the advantage — as did most opponents — is special teams.

Penn State never rebounded against Iowa after a blocked punt was returned for a go-ahead touchdown.

Against the Buckeyes, punt coverage and return yards swung field position in favor of the scarlet and gray, also leaving Penn State with a long field when starting drives.

After the Ohio State game, coach Joe Paterno hinted intense practices may have led to fatigue issues against the Buckeyes, saying they looked a little quicker than the Lions.

The Lions have also started slow in their three road games and in both November games, sometimes because the other team has caught their defense off guard.

"We've been trying to start fast and jump on teams," Lee said. "Sometimes from a defensive standpoint, you

have to make a few adjustments. We obviously wanna start strong, but we understand sometimes you're not going to."

But Penn State's M.O. in big games this year has been forgetting to show up in the second half. In both losses, it has been held scoreless after halftime.

"In terms of big games, we need to establish ourselves early and stay consistent," senior defensive tackle Jared Odrick said.

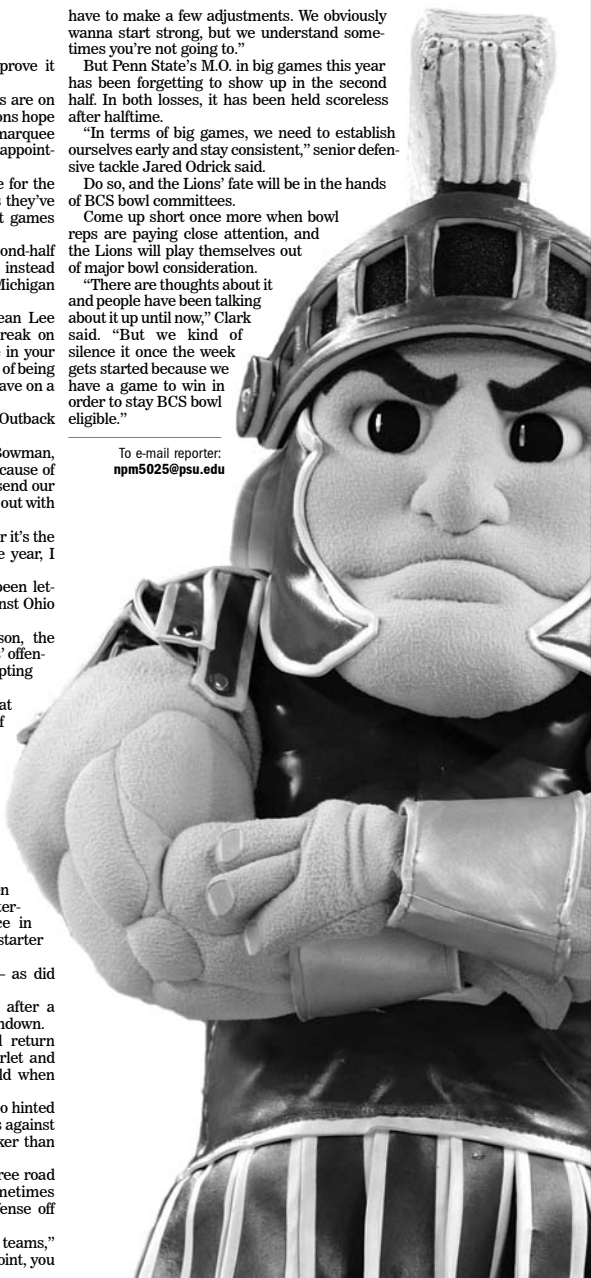
Do so, and the Lions' fate will be in the hands of BCS bowl committees.

Come up short once more when bowl reps are paying close attention, and the Lions will play themselves out of major bowl consideration.

"There are thoughts about it and people have been talking about it up until now," Clark said.

"But we kind of silence it once the week gets started because we have a game to win in order to stay BCS bowl eligible."

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**WHERE COULD PSU END UP?**



The ACC champion is headed to Miami to face an at-large team. Penn State and Iowa could be top possibilities.



The Big 12 is tied to the Fiesta Bowl, but Texas is likely headed to the national title game, leaving two at-large spots.



A Penn State loss to Michigan State could send it to Tampa as the Big Ten's No. 3 or 4 bowl selection.



Should the Lions beat the Spartans but miss out on the BCS, a trip to Orlando against the SEC is probable.

**Daily Collegian Predictions**

**Matt Brown**



**Score:** PSU 28, MSU 24  
**What's good:** Moye gets out of slump with big plays.  
**What's bad:** Issues arise in the secondary.  
**What to look for:** PSU falls behind, makes comeback.

**Matt Fortuna**



**Score:** PSU 31, MSU 28  
**What's good:** BCS hopes still alive.  
**What's bad:** PSU keeps ugly Land Grant Trophy.  
**What to look for:** A few snaps for Newsome.

**Nate Mink**



**Score:** PSU 30, MSU 24  
**What's Good:** Perfect road record.  
**What's Bad:** Same story for special teams.  
**What to look for:** Royster passes 1,000-yard mark.

**Wayne Staats**



**Score:** PSU 21, MSU 17  
**What's good:** Lions win turnover battle.  
**What's bad:** Is close win enough for pollsters?  
**What to look for:** Land Grant Trophy not dropped again.