Welcome to Spartan Stadium for the 102nd meeting between Michigan State and Michigan. The two rivals will play for the Paul Bunyan Trophy this afternoon, which has been awarded to the winner of this game since 1953. The 4-foot wooden statue, featuring the giant lumberjack astride an axe with feet planted on a map of the state, was donated by then-Governor G. Mennen Williams to mark Michigan State’s acceptance into the Big Ten Conference.

The Spartans (1-3) are coming off a 38-30 loss in their Big Ten opener at Wisconsin. The Wolverines, ranked No. 22 in The Associated Press Poll, are off to a 4-0 start after defeating Indiana last weekend, 36-33.

**FIRST-AND-10**

- Michigan State is looking for consecutive wins over Michigan for the first time since it won three straight from 1965-67. The Spartans defeated the Wolverines in Ann Arbor last season, 35-21, marking MSU’s first win at Michigan Stadium since 1990 and the largest margin of victory over Michigan since 1967.

- Michigan leads the all-time series over Michigan State, 67-29-5. Since MSU’s first year in the Big Ten in 1953, the Wolverines hold a 34-20-2 advantage over the Spartans.

- The team with the most productive ground attack has won 36 of the last 39 games in the series. Led by Javon Ringer’s 194 yards, the Spartans outrushed the Wolverines in last year’s meeting.

- MSU ranks second among opponents in all-time victories over Michigan. Only Ohio State (41) has posted more wins over the Wolverines than the Spartans (29).

- Through four games, Michigan State’s passing attack is averaging 320.8 yards a game, which leads the Big Ten and ranks eighth in the nation. MSU has already thrown more touchdown passes this season (13) than all of last season (11). The Spartans also lead the Big Ten in total offense, averaging 438.5 ypg.

- Greg Jones leads the Big Ten and is tied for second in the nation in tackles, averaging 13.0 stops a game (52 total). Jones has collected double-digit tackles in 10 of his last 11 games.

Michigan State center Joel Nitchman holds up the Paul Bunyan Trophy after the Spartans defeated Michigan last season in Ann Arbor, 35-21.
• Blair White ranks fourth in the conference in receptions (23) and receiving yards (87.5 ypg).

• Since missing the first two games with an injury, Mark Dell has led the team in receiving yards the past two games with 195 yards on 11 catches (17.7 avg.).

• Brett Swenson kicked a 28-yard field goal in the Wisconsin game to move into second place in school history with 58 career field goals made; that mark is also the second best among active FBS players, trailing only Alabama’s Leigh Tiffin, who has 61.

• Kirk Cousins recorded back-to-back 200-yard passing games on the road at Notre Dame and Wisconsin. Cousins recorded career highs in passing yards (302), completions (23) and attempts (35) at Notre Dame, while throwing for 201 yards at Wisconsin.

NOTES FROM THE WISCONSIN GAME

• Michigan State passed for 396 yards, tying for the second-highest total in school history (record: 400 vs. Michigan, 1999); MSU also threw for 396 yards vs. Purdue in 1998.

• Keshawn Martin recorded career highs in receptions (four) and receiving yards (139) and also scored the first two touchdowns of his career. The first TD arrived at the 2:07 mark in the fourth quarter, a 15-yard reception from Keith Nichol; the second from Nichol, a 91-yard TD with 15 seconds left in the game, was the second-longest pass play in school history (record: 93 yards, Tony Banks to Nigea Carter, Indiana 1994).

• Nichol threw for a career-high 195 yards through the air, completing 7-of-12 passes for two touchdowns.

• Roderick Jenrette (13) and Trenton Robinson (11) each recorded career highs in tackles.

TEN YEARS AGO: NO. 11 MICHIGAN STATE 34, NO. 3 MICHIGAN 31

On Oct. 11, 1999, the college football world revolved around East Lansing as two unbeaten and ranked rivals squared off in one of the most classic games in the Michigan State-Michigan series.

Both the Spartans and Wolverines entered the contest with identical 5-0 records, prompting ESPN College GameDay to broadcast its weekly on-campus show from the end zone in Spartan Stadium.

The game lived up to its billing, thanks to record-setting performances by Spartan quarterback Bill Burke and wide receiver Plaxico Burress. Burke threw for a school-record 400 yards against the Wolverines, while Burress had 10 receptions for a then-MSU single-game record 255 yards.

The duo helped Michigan State jump out to a 27-10 lead, capped by a 15-yard TD catch by Burress late in the third quarter.

Following a Michigan touchdown that made it 27-17, Dawan Moss pushed the lead back to 17 points for MSU with a 14-yard run at the 12:19 mark in the fourth quarter.

Wolverine quarterback Tom Brady, who passed for 285 yards in the contest, threw two fourth-quarter touchdown passes, but the rally wasn’t enough as the Spartans recovered a Michigan onside kick with under three minutes remaining to hold on to the 34-31 victory.

The 1999 Spartans would go on to become just the second team in school history to win 10 games, capped by a thrilling 37-34 victory over Florida in the Citrus Bowl.

JOHN MILLER NAMED HONORARY CAPTAIN

John Miller, a four-year letterwinner as a defensive back from 1985-88, has been selected to serve as an honorary captain for today’s game against Michigan. The two-time first-team All-Big Ten selection and 1988 team captain ranks tied for fourth in Spartan history with 14 career interceptions.

Miller was a key member of the Spartan defense that helped Michigan State win the 1987 Big Ten title. In one of the best defensive performances in school history, he intercepted four passes in the 1987 victory over Michigan, which still stands as an MSU single-game record. He finished with eight interceptions that season, tied for second in the school record books. Perhaps his biggest pick arrived in the 1988 Rose Bowl win over USC, when he iced the game with an interception at the Spartan 13-yard line with just three seconds remaining.

Michigan State (1-3, 0-1 Big Ten)
Head Coach: Mark Dantonio (South Carolina, 1978)
MSU Record: 17-13 (.567), third year
Overall Record: 35-30 (.538), sixth year

Sept. 6 MONTANA STATE ......... W, 44-3
Sept. 12 CENTRAL MICHIGAN ...... L, 27-29
Sept. 19 at Notre Dame ............ L, 30-33
Sept. 26 at Wisconsin ............. "
Oct. 3 MICHIGAN .................. 12 p.m.
Oct. 10 at Illinois ................. 12 p.m.
Oct. 17 NORTHWESTERN .......... 12 p.m.
Oct. 24 IOWA ...................... 7 p.m.
Oct. 31 at MINNESOTA .......... 8 p.m.
Nov. 7 WESTERN MICHIGAN ...... 12 p.m.
Nov. 14 at Purdue ................. TBA
Nov. 21 PENN STATE .......... TBA

Team Statistics
MSU OPP
Scoring 131 103
Points per game 32.8 25.8
Rushing Yardage 471 454
Average per rush 4.0 3.2
Average per game 117.8 113.5
TDs rushing 3 2
Passing Yardage 1283 997
Att.-Comp.-Int. 147-85-4 138-90-2
Average per game 320.8 249.2
TDs Passing 13 10
Total Offense 1754 1451
Average per game 438.5 362.8
Fumbles-Lost 5-2 2-1
Third Down Conversions 21/46 26/58
Sacks By-Yards 8-53 3-17

MICHIGAN STATE LEADERS
Rushing Att. Yds. Avg. TD
Caulton Ray 34 145 4.3 1
Larry Caper 31 141 4.5 2
Passing Yards Att. Comp. Yds. TD
Kirk Cousins 104 63 850 7
Keith Nichol 42 21 403 5
Receiving No. Yds. Avg. TD
Blair White 23 350 15.2 4
B.J. Cunningham 19 245 12.9 3
Tackles Solo Asst. Total TFL
Greg Jones 22 30 52 4.5
Trenton Robinson 14 16 30 0.0
Marcus Hyde 11 11 22 0.0

Michigan (4-0, 1-0 Big Ten)
Head Coach: Rich Rodriguez (West Virginia, 1986)
UM Record: 7-9 (.438), second year
Overall Record: 112-71-2 (.611), 17th year

Sept. 5 WESTERN MICHIGAN ....... W, 31-7
Sept. 12 NOTRE DAME ............. W, 38-34
Sept. 19 EASTERN MICHIGAN ...... W, 45-17
Sept. 25 INDIANA ................. W, 36-33
Oct. 3 at Michigan State ........... 12 p.m.
Oct. 10 at Iowa .................. 8 p.m.
Oct. 17 DELAWARE STATE ......... TBA
Oct. 24 PENN STATE ............. TBA
Oct. 31 at Illinois ............... 3:30 p.m.
Nov. 7 PURDUE ................. TBA
Nov. 14 at Wisconsin ........... TBA
Nov. 21 OHIO STATE ............... TBA

Team Statistics
UM OPP
Scoring 150 91
Points per game 37.5 22.8
Rushing Yardage 961 568
Average per rush 5.4 4.2
Average per game 240.2 142.0
TDs rushing 12 6
Passing Yardage 728 975
Att.-Comp.-Int. 102-58-5 145-84-4
Average per game 182.0 243.8
TDs Passing 7 4
Total Offense 1689 1543
Average per game 422.2 385.8
Fumbles-Lost 8-1 4-3
Third Down Conversions 25/58 22/62
Sacks By-Yards 4-30 6-35

MICHIGAN LEADERS
Rushing Att. Yds. Avg. TD
Carlos Brown 39 221 8.4 3
Denard Robinson 29 179 57 0
Passing Yards Att. Comp. Yds. TD
Tate Forcier 87 54 671 7
Denard Robinson 11 4 106 57 0
Receiving No. Yds. Avg. TD
Martavious Odoms 39 97 10.8 1
Kevin Koger 8 106 13.2 2

A GLANCE AHEAD
Michigan State heads back on the road to face Illinois next Saturday, Oct. 10 at 12 p.m. ET. The game will be televised on the Big Ten Network.

For all of the latest information on the Spartan football team, including videos, podcasts, notes and features, check out www.msuspartans.com, the official Michigan State Athletics website, and CoachDantonio.com, the official website of MSU head coach Mark Dantonio. Fans can also follow Spartan Football on Twitter at www.twitter.com/msu_football and Facebook at www.facebook.com/msuathletics.
If only Greg Jones’ opponents could meet him off the field. Then, maybe, they might have a different opinion of the tenacious preseason Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year. It’s hard to get to know him while he’s tracking you down, tripping you up, and slamming you to the turf.

Which is too bad. Because he has a lot to offer.

What they would find is a soft-spoken, humble and mild-mannered man with a quiet determination to succeed and the growing ability to lead.

It’s hard to imagine a player named on national award watch lists and preseason All-America teams as unassuming as Jones. But it all stems from his upbringing in Cincinnati.

Jones’ unrivaled work ethic was instilled in him by his parents, who showed him nothing is given in this world, but earned. Greg Sr. still works multiple jobs at all hours of the day, and his mother, Beverly, was a nurse when Greg was growing up, and now works for Neighborhood Health Care.

“My parents mean everything to me,” said Jones. “Those two taught me everything I know. I feel like I get my mental toughness from my mom. She was the one that taught me you have to keep going no matter what, that’s just the type of person she was. My dad is an up-front guy that always gives a good first impression.”

Beverly might have given Greg his mental edge, but she did not get him started on the football field. His long journey to being an All-Big Ten performer at Michigan State started at the ripe age of 8. And the passion that drives him? How about age 12. It’s safe to say he’s always been one step ahead of the competition.

“I had to beg my mom to play football,” Jones recalled. “My mom wouldn’t let me play when I was 7, but I played the next year.

“When I was 12, one of my coaches told me, ‘Greg, you’re just way too nice on the field.’ I mean, at that point, everyone that you played with were your friends. But he just kept telling me that, over and over. That’s when I changed on the field, starting to play with a little anger. My coaches always said you have to learn how to use that on the field, and when you get off the field, that’s when you can calm down and relax.”

Some points of advice you just never forget.

Jones, who started working out in the weight room as early as the seventh grade, blossomed at Ohio prep powerhouse Archbishop Moeller
High School. With several of his teammates going on to play at Division I programs, Jones knew the amount of work required to earn a scholarship.

"By the ninth and 10th grade, I was starting to understand the difference of the players that played at the next level," said Jones. "That made me just want to push that much harder. I started to figure out where I wanted to be at, that I wanted to play with the best.

"Another thing that motivated me was that I wasn't the highest recruited guy," continued Jones. "I wasn't even close to anybody's top 10 or anything like that, but that wasn't going to hold me back."

When Jones arrived at Michigan State in 2007, he was just another freshman looking for a spot on the field. It was hard to see then that he would soon embody the new tough, physical brand of Spartan football embraced by first-year head coach Mark Dantonio.

"Greg Jones has developed into not just a great playmaker, but a leader for us," said Dantonio. "He does everything a hundred miles an hour and wins with effort, whether it's the winter conditioning program, studying film, or practice on a spring day, he's going to give everything he's got - it's important to him."

Jones made an immediate impact on special teams, and found himself as one of the starting linebackers in an emerging Spartan defense by just his sixth collegiate game. His coming-out party, however, was at No. 1 Ohio State, where he collected 14 tackles, the first of his 12 career games with double-digit stops.

"After that game at Ohio State, that's when I realized I could actually do it at this level," said Jones. "It didn't matter if I was undersized or who I was going against, that's the game I got my confidence."

Since that point, Jones has taken his game to a level few have ever reached at Michigan State. He finished his freshman season with a team-best 78 tackles, becoming the first true freshman to lead the Spartans in that category since 1976. He improved upon that effort with 127 tackles in 2008, landing him on the All-Big Ten first-team as selected by the coaches, a first for a Spartan linebacker since 2001.

"Greg is a humble kid, he's smart, and he's athletic," said defensive coordinator Pat Narduzzi. "I think he has the whole package. He's as good as a linebacker as I have coached in 20 years."

Jones' outstanding work ethic has only increased since his time in East Lansing, in part due to last year's senior class, led by All-American Javon Ringer. This season, Jones is the one leading the team. The players are looking to him. And it's more than simply outsourcing everybody.

"I think about what would be best for my teammates, because ultimately, what's the best for my teammates will be best for me," said Jones. "When your teammates can rely on you, and expect you to do well, on and off the field, that's the biggest thing you can have."

Football is deeply embedded within Jones, but there's also room for a little creativity, as he is often reminded by his mother.

"My mom told me that eventually football is going to end, and that you can't keep tackling everybody," Jones, a media arts major, said. "I'm really interested in sports commercials. For me, it's just thinking about how you create stuff like that; it challenges my mind a whole lot when I see it."

Jones still has a ways to go before producing commercials. In fact, he may be closer to being in one than conceiving one.

Got some great new content for you? Let me know! We can discuss anything you'd like. I'm here to help.

"When your teammates can rely on you, and expect you to do well, on and off the field, that's the biggest thing you can have."
2009 MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS

26 David Spears
RB • R-Fr.
Muskegon, Mich.

15 Donald Spencer
WR • Fr.
Ypsilanti, Mich.

58 Hugh Stangeland
OL • Fr.
Ridgefield, Conn.

48 Drew Stevens
LB • R-Fr.
Delaware, Ohio

66 John Stipek
C • Sr.-5
Macomb Township, Mich.

57 Johnathan Strayhorn
DE • So.
Detroit, Mich.

14 Brett Swenson
K • Sr.
Pompano Beach, Fla.

30 Brynden Trawick
LB • So.
Marietta, Ga.

93 Blake Treadwell
DT • Fr.
East Lansing, Mich.

9 Jeremy Ware
CB • Sr.-5
Fort Myers, Fla.

37 Ross Weaver
CB • Sr.-5
Southfield, Mich.

35 Marcus Webb
LB • Sr.-5
Pontiac, Mich.

25 Blair White
WR • Sr.-5
Saginaw, Mich.

32 Mitchell White
CB • R-Fr.
Livonia, Mich.

86 Myles White
WR • R-Fr.
Livonia, Mich.

21 Patrick White
WR • Fr.
Pickerington, Ohio

51 Jamilr Williams
DE • So.
Lima, Ohio

70 Oren Wilson
NT • Jr.
Teaneck, N.J.

41 Glenn Winston
RB • So.
Detroit, Mich.

99 Jerel Worthy
DT • R-Fr.
Huber Heights, Ohio

59 D.J. Young
OT • Jr.
Lansing, Mich.

2009 MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS
COACHING/TRAINING STAFF:

Front Row (L-R): Brad Lunsford, Dave Warner, Mark Staten, Dan Roushar, Dan Enos, Don Treadwell, Mark Dantonio, Pat Narduzzi, Mike Tressel, Ted Gill, Harlon Barnett, Tim Allen.
Third Row (L-R): Bob Knickerbocker, Zak Willis, Nick Ruffing, Reed Schuitema, Tom Shepard, Randy Gillon.

ATHLETIC TRAINING STAFF:

Front Row (L-R): Mike Chapman, Ken Bergin, Brooke Largay, Jennifer Seid, Candy Anderson ATC, Clarissa Hall, Jerrin Guindon, Dave Whisenant.
Back Row (L-R): Sally Nogle PhD ATC, Brett Penning ATC, Jeremy Metzler MD, Mike Shingles DO, Andy Schorthaar DO, Doug Dietzel DO, Jit Mookergee DO, Brooke Lemmen DO, Jeff Monroe MS ATC. Not pictured: Randy Pearson MD.