

# No. 4. Ohio State put to the test before downing No. 25 Michigan State 34-10

Ohio State was pushed for the first time this season, but the No. 5 Buckeyes pushed back after a poor start to beat No. 25 Michigan State 34-10 before 104,797 fans at Ohio Stadium on Saturday night.

Junior J.K. Dobbins had 172 yards on 24 carries and his 67-yard touchdown run in the second quarter made it 24-10 before the Buckeyes (6-0, 3-0 Big Ten) added a field to complete the first half.

Ohio State sophomore quarterback Justin Fields had one touchdown pass on 17 of 25 completions for 206 yards but in the third quarter threw his first interception of the season on his 175<sup>th</sup> attempt.

His 1-yard run with 10:34 left in the game upped the lead to 34-10.

Ohio State had 320 of its 526 total yards on the ground. Michigan State had 285 yards (216 passing, 67 rushing).

## How It Happened

Ohio State in its all-black uniforms got off to an auspicious start on its first two drives - and the Spartans were even worse.

The opening series of the game resulted in a fourth-and-26 for the Buckeyes from the OSU 9 after Fields sustained a 16-yard sack.

A 53-yard punt by junior Drue Chrisman got the Buckeyes out of trouble. On MSU's second play, Cody White caught a pass for 9 yards to the Spartans 49, but senior cornerback Damon Arnette stripped the ball and senior linebacker Malik Harrison scooped it up and ran 22 yards to the 27.

The Buckeyes put nothing on the board. A false start against sophomore right guard Wyatt Davis led to a fourth-and-3 at the 20 and junior Blake Haubeil missed a 37-yard field goal attempt to the right.

MSU turned it over again on its second play after the touchback when Brian Lewerke fumbled on the option and the ball was recovered by senior defensive tackle Davon Hamilton at the Spartans 22.

OSU ran three plays for a total of no yards, including a 1-yard sack of Fields on third down. This time, Haubeil nailed a 39-yarder for the 3-0 lead at 8:04 of the first.

Ohio State's next drive started at its 5 following a punt and it stalled because a holding call on graduate left guard Jonah Jackson negated 33-yard run by Dobbins to the MSU 43. That was followed by senior receiver Binjimen Victor dropping a wide-open pass at about the same spot.

The Buckeyes totaled 16 total yards, zero rushing, on 16 plays in the first quarter.

Victor redeemed himself with a 60-yard TD reception at 12:12 of the second quarter for a 10-0 lead for a 5-play, 86-yard, 1:57 drive.

The key play was a third-and-7 from the OSU 17 grab across the middle by graduate receiver K.J. Hill for 10 yards. Dobbins broke off a 10-yard gain before Fields rolled right and flipped the ball to an open Victor at the MSU 43. He raced down the sideline and dove into the end zone at the pylon.

MSU responded in kind with a five-play, 75-yard, 1:36 scoring drive. Quarterback Brian Lewerke started it with a designed run for 13 yards to the Spartans 38. After an incomplection, Elijah Collins rushed for 23 to the OSU 39; Matt Seybert had a 19-yard catch and Darrell Stewart caught a 20-yard TD pass to make it 10-7 at 10:36.

Fields led the Buckeyes 75 yards in 2:27 and seven plays, the last a 21-yarder to junior tight end Luke Farrell for the 17-7 advantage at 8:09. Fields had a 35-yard run to the MSU 35, Hill had a catch for 2 more and Dobbins ran to the 24.

The next play saw Fields ran for 13 yards to the 11 but a hold by freshman receiver Garrett Wilson brought the ball back to the 21. Fields immediately found Farrell at the 10 and he bullied his way in.

MSU answered again with a series that consumed 5:04 and nine plays even though it went for only 34 yards and resulted in a 39-yard field goal by Matt Coghlin for a 17-10 score with 3:36 left before halftime.

Dobbins extended the lead to 24-10 just 72 seconds later with a 67-yard TD run at 2:24, shirking a would-be tackler at the 20.

Starting at their own 29 with 1:46 left, the Buckeyes reached the 26 before Haubeil's 44-yard field goal with five seconds left made it 27-10.

OSU had 24 points on its last four drives of the half after getting three in the first four series. The Buckeyes have outscored opponents 134-20 in the second quarter.

MSU drove to the 9 to open the third quarter only to see Coghlin miss to the left on a 22-yard field goal attempt.

OSU's chance at increasing the lead when it got the ball evaporated after driving to the MSU 29. On first down, Fields threw his first interception of the season in 175 attempts and Josiah Scott returned it from the 14 to the Spartans 46 but the Ohio State defense forced a three-and-out.

The Buckeyes had another big stop to end the third quarter when MSU faced third-and-14 from its 49. Junior linebacker Baron Browning came off the edge and buried Lewerke for 9-yard sack.

OSU took a delayed 34-10 lead at 10:34 of the fourth quarter on Fields' 1-yarder, a play after Dobbins' 3-yard TD run was overruled after video because his knee was down.

Dobbins was a major contributor on the 11-play, 80-yard, 4:09 sequence with his 29-yard jaunt to the 20 after Victor's catch for 12. Fields rushed for nine to the 6 on third down. Dobbins then went five yards on two carries before the score.

Later, Fields lost a fumble at the OSU 34 but on the ensuing play, senior Jordan Fuller had an 87-yard pick six, but it was called back because of an illegal block by Browning, who had tipped the ball.

