

Three Questions Asked: Michigan State



Ohio State dominated opponents during its five-game homestand to open the season, outscoring the five visitors by a combined total of 244-74 and jumping out to a 5-0 record. But the Buckeyes will stray outside of Columbus for the first this season to face the 2-3 Michigan State Spartans, which have lost their last three games.

Buckeye Sports Bulletin is taking a look at the three biggest questions facing Ohio State as the Buckeyes get set to take the field on Saturday.

1. How Will Ohio State Handle The Hostile Environment?

As previously mentioned, the Buckeyes are yet to experience the difficulties of playing on the road this season.

Head coach Ryan Day and several players have noted that they'll need to lean on their veteran leadership in an environment like the one that is typically presented at Spartan Stadium. While the Buckeyes have placed an increased focus on competitive stamina since the offseason, they will likely need to dip into that notion when battling the Spartans.

It appears center Luke Wypler is ready for the hostility that is awaiting the Buckeyes in East Lansing, Mich., as noted that he's excited to be "the bad guy in the arena" on Wednesday.

2. How Will OSU's Secondary Play Against Michigan State's Passing Attack?

Although the Spartans were largely known for their rushing prowess last season, quarterback Payton Thorne produced a very solid campaign in 2021 — throwing for 3,232 yards and 27 touchdowns.

While Thorne has seen a dip in production to this point in the season — tossing eight touchdowns to six

interceptions — he still boasts a dangerous arm and capable decision-making skills. He also still has dynamic wideouts in Jayden Reed, Tre Mosley and Keon Coleman to make his life all that much easier.

Ohio State's health in the secondary has come into question for much of the first five weeks of this season, but the Buckeyes have largely gone untested in that time. Saturday may prove to be the first real test for the banged-up Buckeye secondary.

3. How Will C.J. Stroud Bounce Back From His Outing Against Rutgers?

Ohio State quarterback C.J. Stroud had one of the worst performances in his career against Rutgers — yet he still tossed two touchdowns and led the Buckeyes to a 49-10 win. He posted career lows in yards (154) and completion percentage (59.1) against the Scarlet Knights.

Michigan State's porous secondary should give Stroud the opportunity to bounce back in a big way. The Spartans' pass defense ranks 13th in the Big Ten, allowing 275.0 yards per game through the air.

It's important to remember that Stroud had one of his more signature games against the Spartans last season, tossing six first-half touchdowns — doubling his total incomplection output — and 432 yards while leading the Buckeyes to a 56-7 win.