



PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

Big Ten Conference - East Division

PENN STATE BIO

National Championships - 2



1982
1986

X2

XO

Big Ten Championships: 4
(Last: 2016)

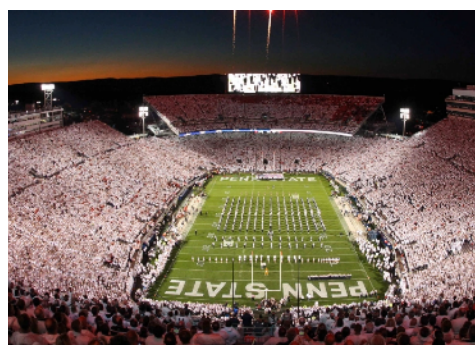
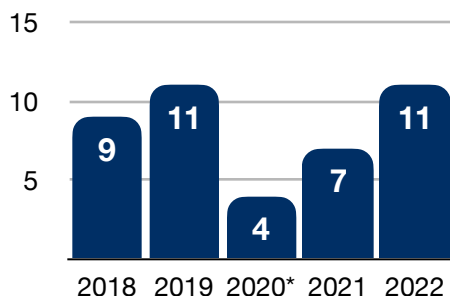
Location: **State College, PA**

All-Time Record: **898-398-37**

2021 Results: **11-2**
Won Rose Bowl

Head Coach: **James Franklin**
10th Year (78-36)

5-YEAR WIN TREND



Beaver Stadium (106,572)

Will 2023 Be Penn State's Breakthrough Year?

Penn State's 11-win season in 2022 certainly helped James Franklin's job security and so too did his 10-year contract extension that was signed in 2021. Last season was a success on almost all fronts. Penn State claimed a win against the eventual Big Ten West division winners in week one and embarrassed Auburn at Jordan-Hare. The Nittany Lions eventually claimed their third New Year's Six victory in just six seasons with a Rose Bowl win over Utah. While last season was a vast improvement from 2020 (4-5) and 2021 (7-6), Penn State still seems to be missing that signature win that will vault them from a New Year's Six bid to a spot in the coveted final four. #5 Michigan had no trouble disposing of the Nittany Lions and a fourth quarter massacre against #2 Ohio State ended Penn State's hopes of a Big Ten title or Playoff appearance. Obviously those two schools were tops in the nation but these are the kinds of games Franklin and company need to win and they have mostly eluded the Nittany Lions. However, Franklin brings in what could very well be the most talented roster he's had and the schedule aligns itself nicely for a big season.

Sean Clifford finishes his long and storied career as Penn State's all-time leading passer with 10,661 yards. Penn State fans will remember him as a great leader and a tough and valiant competitor and he wrapped up his career in what was arguably his best season. He received a well deserved standing ovation when he exited the Rose Bowl. Yet, as great as Clifford was at times, he had his fair share of "lows" too. **Drew Allar** steps in and, although still young, he offers a high ceiling and superb arm talent. He saw limited action but did appear in all but three games for the Nittany Lions.

Allar's debut as QB1 will be highly anticipated in State College, but the truth of the matter is that he doesn't even need to be "elite" for Penn State to have success given so much talent around him. If Allar is just "great", that should get the job done. **Nicholas Singleton** dazzled as a freshman and ran for 1,061 yards almost effortlessly. **Krytron Allen** added 867 yards on the ground and both players are back which gives Penn State one of the best running back rooms in the country. To make matters even better, Singleton and Allen will be running behind an offensive line that will be Joe Moore Award-worthy. **Olu Fashanu** is arguably the best tackle in the country and **Caedan Wallace** is also highly skilled. **Sam Wormley** was an honorable mention All-Big-Ten performer at guard. The offensive line was strong last year even though they battled consistent injuries and if they stay healthy they'll be even better. Penn State will need to find ways to make up for the production of Parker Washington and Mitchell Tinsley but they did bring in **Dante Cephas** from the portal out of Kent State and tight end **Theo Johnson** is a major weapon.

Penn State has now held opponents to under 20 points per game in the last two seasons and three of the last four. While players like Joey Porter and Ji'Ayir Brown have taken their talents to the NFL, this defense is still remarkably talented. Defensive coordinator Manny Diaz is one of the best in the business and will simply reload where there are gaps. Porter and Brown understandably got most of the attention from scouts and media which allowed **Kalen King** to fly under the radar and collect three interceptions of his own. He now walks into the spotlight as Penn State's next lockdown corner candidate. The defensive line could be flat out scary with ends **Adisa Isaac** and **Demeioun Robinson** tearing through the offensive front. They combined for 9.5 sacks last season and I expect that number to increase. **Curtis Jacobs** and **Abdul Carter** combined for 10.5 sacks at their respective linebacker positions and it's possible this unit will hold opposing teams to under 100 rush yards per game just like they did in 2019.

The Bottom Line: I am really high on this Penn State team. The defense will be elite and I expect enough improvements on offense to lift the Nittany Lions to new heights. They obviously need to find a way to knock off either Ohio State or Michigan (if not both) but I think they could actually catch the Wolverines at home. If Drew Allar proves to be a star, the Nittany Lions will be well on their way to the program's first appearance in the Playoff.

Projection: 11-1 (2nd in Big Ten East)

2022 Statistics

Points Scored

35.8

20th in FBS

Rush Yards

252.5

46th in FBS

Pass Yards

298.3

14th in FBS

Turnover Margin

+11

T-10th in FBS

Points Allowed

18.2

9th in FBS

Rush YDS Allowed

111.2

17th in FBS












Pass YDS Allowed

212.3

46th in FBS



2023 Penn State Schedule

Week	Date	Team
1	Sat, Sept 2	 vs. West Virginia
2	Sat, Sept 9	 vs. Delaware
3	Sat, Sept 16	 @ Illinois
4	Sat, Sept 23	 vs. Iowa
5	Sat, Sept 30	 @ Northwestern
6	Bye Week	
7	Sat, Oct 14	 vs. UMass
8	Sat, Oct 21	 @ Ohio State
9	Sat, Oct 28	 vs. Indiana
10	Sat, Nov 4	 @ Maryland
11	Sat, Nov 11	 vs. Michigan
12	Sat, Nov 18	 vs. Rutgers
13	Fri, Nov 24	 vs. Michigan St.*

Conference Games in Bold

KEY GAMES

Sat, Sept 23: vs. Iowa - In the last meeting, Penn State lost a Top 4 matchup in a game that could have looked quite different if Clifford had not been injured. The Iowa defense will be significant test for young Allar.

Sat, Oct 21: @ Ohio State - The Buckeyes have won the last six games in the series and several of them haven't even been close. Penn State will need to overcome the planned "Scarlet Out" at the Shoe.

Sat, Nov 11: vs. Michigan - In the last three losses against the Wolverines, Michigan has been ranked in the Top 10. That will almost certainly be the case again this season and Penn State will want some revenge after last year's 41-17 blowout loss.

KEY PLAYERS

Drew Allar - QB



In 2022, Allar was tagged with the elusive 5-star ranking as a recruit and named the top quarterback prospect in the country by 24/7 Sports. Now, we get to watch Allar live up to that billing. He's supported by an excellent offense line and two dominant running backs which should only help his transition to the role of starter. He can make every throw in the book and is slippery; he'll use his legs to get out of tricky situations and extend plays.

Nicholas Singleton - RB

Singleton topped 1,061 yards as a freshman on just 156 carries. His explosiveness and lightning speed set him apart and another offseason in the weight room will help him shed even more tackles. He's also lethal in the kick return game (just ask Rutgers who watched him run one back 100 yards for a touchdown).



2022 RESULTS (11-2)

@ Purdue (W 35-31)
Ohio (W 46-10)
@ Auburn (W 41-12)
Central Michigan (W 33-14)
Northwestern (W 17-7)
@ Michigan (L 17-41)
Minnesota (W 45-17)
Ohio State (L 31-44)
@ Indiana (W 45-14)
Maryland (W 30-0)
@ Rutgers (W 55-10)
Michigan State (W 35-16)
Utah (W 35-21)

PENN STATE

RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

13th

(Via 24/7 Sports)