

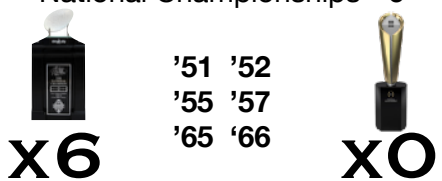


MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS

Big Ten Conference - East Division

MICHIGAN STATE BIO

National Championships - 6



'51 '52
'55 '57
'65 '66

Big Ten Championships: 9
(Last: 2015)

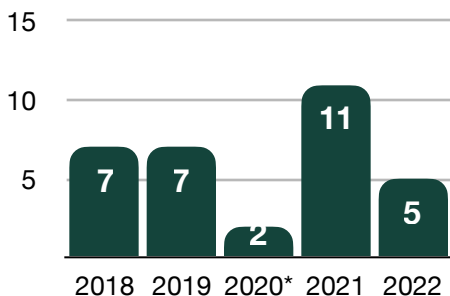
Location: **East Lansing, MI**

All-Time Record: **598-402-30**

2022 Results: **5-7**

Head Coach: **Mel Tucker**
4th Year (18-14)

5-YEAR WIN TREND



Spartan Stadium (75,005)

Will Transfer Portal Be Kind to Sparty?

Mel Tucker hit a home run in the transfer portal in 2021 and brought in Kenneth Walker who eventually became the best running back in the country. He was less successful, however, in 2022. The Spartans couldn't build on the momentum gained from that 11-win season in 2021 and completely missed out on a bowl game last season. Michigan State's lot didn't improve much in the offseason. Instead of being on the "receiving" end of the portal they were on the "giving" end. Payton Thorne was the Spartans' starting quarterback the past two seasons and leaves East Lansing for Auburn. Keon Coleman was the team's best receiver with 58 catches for 798 yards and is now a member of the Florida State Seminoles. Running back Elijah Collins is also gone. Tucker brought in his fair share of transfers but considering who's leaving versus who's joining the program, the portal appears to be a net negative for Sparty in 2023. That's a problem considering Michigan State occupies the same division as juggernauts Ohio State, Penn State, and Michigan and Maryland is a team with high upside as well. Attempting a rebuild in this division is not a fun place to be, but that's where Michigan State finds themselves.

The starting quarterback spot has been up for grabs ever since Thorne transferred out and **Noah Kim** and **Katin Houser** are the two candidates. Kim saw a small bit of playing time last season (mostly in mop-up duty) and went 14 for 19 with 174 yards and three touchdowns. Houser is a four-star recruit who saw the field for two passes against Akron but who otherwise hasn't taken any collegiate snaps. With two very winnable games to begin the season, don't be surprised to see both quarterbacks lead drives as Tucker looks for one player to emerge as the best option.

Given the inexperience at quarterback, establishing the run will be especially important and the Spartans struggled in that particular aspect with Kenneth Walker in the NFL. Wisconsin transfer **Jalen Berger** was Michigan State's leading rusher with 683 yards and with both Elijah Collins and Jared Broussard gone he may see more carries this season. Tucker brought in **Jaren Mangham** from South Florida and **Nathan Carter** from UConn so we'll see if this year's transfers are more effective than last season. The offense line brings back both tackles **Spencer Brown** and **Brandon Baldwin** and guard **JD Duplain** might be the most consistent option on the line.

Kim or Houser will have to break in a relatively fresh wide receiver group. Both Coleman and Jayden Reed are gone which means the Spartans must replace their combined 113 catches, 1,434 yards, and 12 touchdowns. Their departure leaves **Tre Mosley** as the leading returner and tight end **Maliq Carr** finished behind him. Berger will be utilized out of the backfield in the passing game, too. Michigan State needs players like **Tyrell Henry**, **Christian Fitzpatrick**, and **Montorie Foster** to emerge as legitimate threats.

Michigan State's pass defense was one of the worst in the country in 2021 and prevented the Spartans on fully capitalizing on what was an otherwise magical season. That unit was better last season but still has room to grow and must now replace NFL draft pick Amber Speed. **Charles Brantley** is the only true returner in the secondary. **Cal Haladay** is the undisputed leader of the defense and paved the way with 120 tackles from his middle linebacker position. **Jacoby Windmon** added a team-best 5.5 sacks. **Dre Butler** (Liberty) and **Tunmise Adeleke** (Texas A&M) are here to bolster the defensive front.













The Bottom Line: Unless several players step into bigger roles and exceed expectations, Michigan State faces an uphill battle in what appears at face value to be a rebuilding year. Leaving divisions behind will help the Spartans long-term but the conference is also only getting better with incoming additions. Can Sparty put themselves back into Big Ten contention in the near future? While the answer for 2023 is a likely "no" it's important that Michigan State find their way back to a bowl game. Even that will be challenging with Washington on the schedule in addition to the usual Big Ten hurdles. The Spartans avoid Wisconsin out of the West but still pull Iowa. If they can somehow finish 3-2 in September that will be a major success and will give them a shot at the postseason.

Projection: 4-8 (6th in Big Ten East)

2022 Statistics

Points Scored	Rush Yards	Pass Yards	Turnover Margin
24.4	113.0	240.0	-4
92nd in FBS	111th in FBS	58th in FBS	T-97th in FBS
Points Allowed	Rush YDS Allowed	Pass YDS Allowed	S
27.4	178.6	237.9	
75th in FBS	102nd in FBS	87th in FBS	

2023 Michigan State Schedule

Week	Date	Team
1	Fri, Sept 1	 vs. C. Michigan
2	Sat, Sept 9	 vs. Richmond
3	Sat, Sept 16	 vs. Washington
4	Sat, Sept 23	 vs. Maryland
5	Sat, Sept 30	 @ Iowa
6	Bye Week	
7	Sat, Oct 14	 @ Rutgers
8	Sat, Oct 21	 Michigan
9	Sat, Oct 28	 @ Minnesota
10	Sat, Nov 4	 vs. Nebraska
11	Sat, Nov 11	 @ Ohio State
12	Sat, Nov 18	 @ Indiana
13	Fri, Nov 24	 vs. Penn State*

Conference Games in Bold

KEY GAMES

Sat, Sept 16: Washington - The Huskies downed the Spartans in Washington last season 39-28 and will enter East Lansing with legitimate PAC-12 title and College Football Playoff hopes. Tucker and Sparty aren't a stranger to big games and have claimed a Top 25 win in each of the last three seasons.

Sat, Oct 21: vs. Michigan - The last time the Wolverines came to Spartan Stadium Michigan State orchestrated a remarkable comeback. They'll need similar magic to take down big bad Michigan.

Sat, Nov 4: vs. Nebraska - This home game against the Huskers feels like a pivotal matchup in Michigan State's pursuit of a bowl game. This will be just the third matchup in nine seasons.

KEY PLAYERS

Jalen Berger - RB



Berger made an early impact with back-to-back 100-yard games to start 2022. He was somewhat inconsistent after that but didn't always see enough carries in a game to get into a good rhythm. This season, there is not as much proven depth at the running back position which means he could see more than the 148 carries he received last season. If that's the case, he could flirt with an 1,000-yard season in year two with Sparty.

Cal Haladay - LB

Haladay made an immediate impression as a freshman with 89 tackles and a pair of interceptions including a 78-yard pick six. He didn't have any picks in 2022 but did force and recover a fumble and his tackles soared all the way to 120 which was tied for the most in the entire conference. Haladay has terrific instincts and leads what should be a strong Michigan State linebacker group.



2022 RESULTS (5-7)

Western Michigan (W 35-13)

Akron (W 52-0)

@ Washington (L 28-39)

Minnesota (L 7-34)

@ Maryland (L 13-27)

Ohio State (L 20-49)

Wisconsin (W 34-28)

@ Michigan (L 7-29)

@ Illinois (W 23-15)

Rutgers (W 27-21)

Indiana (L 31-39)

@ Penn State (L 16-35)

MICHIGAN STATE

RECRUITING

2023 Class Ranking

23rd

(Via 24/7 Sports)