

## No. 1 Ohio State Defeats Michigan State, 24-17, to Remain Unbeaten

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COLUMBUS, Ohio – No. 1 Ohio State improved to 8-0 overall and 4-0 in the Big Ten Conference by holding off a late Michigan State rally – sparked by two defensive touchdowns – to win, 24-17, in front of 105,287 fans at Ohio Stadium.

Sophomore Chris “Beanie” Wells rushed for a career-high 221 yards and [Todd Boeckman](#) threw for 193 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Ohio State offense.

Meanwhile, Ohio State's best-in-the-nation defense limited the explosive Spartan offense, which came into the game leading the Big Ten in total offense (467.0), scoring offense (36.9) and second in rushing (242.7), to only three points and 185 total yards. [James Laurinaitis](#) led the charge with 12 tackles.

“Our defense held them to under 200 yards of offense, which is extraordinary for the college game,” [Jim Tressel](#), Ohio State head coach, said.

Ohio State led 17-0 at halftime behind the passing of Boeckman, who was 12-for-16 for 125 yards and one touchdown, and 109 yards rushing by Wells. Included in the team's three first-half scoring drives was an opening-series touchdown for the fourth-consecutive game.

Ohio State's offense merely scoffed at having to start its first two possessions on its own 7 and 1 yard lines, respectively. On the first drive, Wells broke loose for a season-high 47-yard gain to get Ohio State out of a 2nd-and-10 predicament from the 7. Boeckman marched the team down the field from there, hitting [Brian Hartline](#) twice for gains of 28 yards and then capping the seven-play, 93-yard drive by hitting a wide open [Jake Ballard](#) for a 14-yard touchdown and a 7-0 lead.

On Ohio State's second drive, which

started at the 1 courtesy of a 54-yard Aaron Bates punt, Boeckman hit [Brian Robiskie](#) for 42 yards to relieve the Buckeyes from a 3rd-and-9 situation at the OSU 2. Wells then pummeled the Spartans' defense for 23 more yards. The drive would stall, but [Ryan Pretorius](#) connected from 42-yards – his ninth-consecutive made field goal – and Ohio State quickly led 10-0.

The 10-point lead only fueled the fierceness of the Buckeye defense, which helped its own cause on Michigan State's third series. Sophomore defensive tackle [Doug Worthington](#) intercepted Brian Hoyer's third-down pass near the line of scrimmage, setting the Buckeyes' up on the MSU 29. Six plays later Ohio State was back in the end zone and leading 17-0. The key plays in the drive were a 16-yard Boeckman-to-Ballard completion and a 5-yard touchdown run around right end by Wells on fourth down.

Beanie, Boeckman and Brian (Robiskie) produced the key plays on Ohio State's second series of the third quarter to increase the lead to 24-0. First, Wells reversed field and ripped off a 27-yard gain. Three plays later Boeckman found Robiskie alone down the middle of the field for a 50-yard pass play. The touchdown catch was Robiskie's seventh of the season.

Michigan State's defense came up big twice late in the third quarter to make a game of it. Inside of four minutes to go in the quarter, Wiley Otis intercepted Boeckman, who was under a heavy rush, and went 54 yards untouched into the end zone to make the score 24-7.

Just 56 seconds later, Boeckman, under a heavy rush from Jonal Saint-Dic, fumbled and Sirdarean Adams picked up the loose ball and went 25 yards untouched for a touchdown to get the Spartans to within 10 points, 24-14.

Laurinaitis and the Ohio State defense would ensure the victory on this day, though, allowing just one field goal on the Spartans' last two series, a 43-yarder by Brett Swenson with 3:42 to play to make it a one-play game, 24-17.

Ohio State started its next series at its

own 16 and it put the game into the hands of its star rusher. Wells carried on six-consecutive plays and gained three first downs that allowed the remaining 3:42 to elapse, giving Ohio State its 24-17 victory.

“It was an interesting game we played today,” Tressel said. “I thought we played a solid first half, and the defense played solid all game. We gave up 14 points which you can't do if you want to be Big Ten champions, though. Fortunately, we have the defense that we do.”

The defense has still not surrendered a touchdown in Ohio Stadium this season, and it has allowed just four touchdowns all season (one rushing and three passing).

Ohio State has won 26-consecutive regular season games and 18-consecutive Big Ten Conference games. Both marks represent school records. Next week at Penn State, the team will attempt to tie the all-time Big Ten record of 19-consecutive wins set by Michigan from 1990-92. Penn State, incidentally, is the last team to beat Ohio State in a regular season game. That was back on Oct. 8, 2005 in Happy Valley, 17-10.