

Michigan Wolverines Football: U-M Chops MSU, 44-10, To Keep Paul Bunyan

John Borton • TheWolverine

Paul Bunyan will always be a man on the move. But he's thinking hard about rebuilding a log cabin in Ann Arbor.

The Paul Bunyan Trophy never even pulled on his traveling boots Saturday afternoon at Michigan Stadium. Jim Harbaugh's Wolverines (8-2, 5-2 Big Ten) took the lumberjack's ax to Mark Dantonio's Spartans, chopping Michigan State (4-6, 2-5) up in a 44-10 bludgeoning.

You name it, the Wolverines owned it on this afternoon. If Dantonio is developing any unions on his feet, he probably left those in The Big House as well.

Michigan rolled to 467 total yards of offense against MSU's 220, riding senior quarterback Shea Patterson's best day in a Michigan uniform to an overwhelming win.

Patterson threw for 384 yards and four touchdowns, completing 24 of 33 throws and carving up an MSU defense purported to be very good. Patterson connected nine times with sophomore Ronnie Bell for 150 yards, and spread his completions around to nine different targets.

While Patterson carved an early Thanksgiving turkey, Michigan's defense gobbled up quarterback Brian Lewerke and the Spartans. Lewerke went 17-of-30 passing for 166 yards, one touchdown, two interceptions and three sacks, frequently running away for an opportunity to play next week.


U-M outrushed the Spartans, 83-54, but it was Patterson's arm that buried MSU beneath a massive pile of wood chips.

"It was pretty cool," Harbaugh said. "Somebody told me he broke a record for the most passing yards by a Michigan quarterback in a Michigan State game — 384. The old record was 285, by Tom Brady.

"[To break the record] by 99 yards — I'd call that a whale of a game. That's a heck of a game by the kid.

"He was really sharp in every way — seeing the field, making the throws ... Everything, really."

It proved an equally tough defeat for the Spartans, who now need to win their final two games to make a bowl.

 44	11/16/2019 • ATTENDANCE 111,496				
	MICHIGAN STADIUM ANN ARBOR, MI				
QT	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Tot
Michigan State	7	0	3	0	10
Michigan	0	17	10	17	44

Some said this was MSU's Super Bowl. If so, the Spartans can relate to the Denver Broncos, who lost Super Bowl XXIV, 55-10, to the San Francisco 49ers.

"Credit Michigan," MSU coach Mark Dantonio said. "They played extremely well on defense and offense. I talked about them having shock. We had to play with that same type of shock and explosiveness."

On this day, the only shock and explosiveness displayed by the Spartans involved the Wile E. Coyote variety.

The Spartans actually struck first, going 60 yards in nine plays for a touchdown with 1:48 remaining in the first quarter. After Lewerke moved the chains on a key fourth-and-one keeper, he gunned a 36-yard pass down the left hash to Cody White.

A replay put the initially called touchdown back at the 1, but Lewerke then floated a throw to uncovered fullback Max Rosenthal for the TD. Michigan thus trailed for the first time since the Penn State game nearly a month earlier, 7-0.

The Wolverines struck back immediately, going 68 yards in seven plays for the tying score. Completions of 15, seven, eight and 18 yards by Patterson — boosted by the obligatory late hit on a toss to junior wideout Donovan Peoples-Jones (four catches, 48 yards) by MSU defensive back Shakur Brown — set Michigan up at the Spartans' 3.

Redshirt freshman tailback Hassan Haskins and the U-M offensive line took it from there, Haskins blasting in from a yard out on a second straight direct snap. At 14:29 of the second quarter, the showdown stood dead even.

The Wolverine then put together one of the best drives of the season — 98 yards in 12 plays, capped by redshirt junior tight end Nick Eubanks' five-yard touchdown grab.

Backed up to his own 2, Patterson moved out of the shadow of his own goalposts with a third-down, chains-moving throw to Peoples-Jones. Patterson then connected with Bell on a scrambling 18-yarder, following his own 15-yard keeper.

"Every time we take the field, we're trying to score," Patterson said. "The mindset going into that drive was to go down and score, no matter where we were on the field."

The senior QB ultimately gunned the touchdown pass, and with MSU managing only 40 second-quarter yards, the next opportunity wasn't far away.

U-M took advantage, Patterson firing a 42-yard sideline bomb to Bell to set up redshirt junior Quinn Nordin's 28-yard field goal 15 seconds prior to intermission.

Heading in up 17-7, the Wolverines knew they faced plenty of work remaining.

They took almost no time to strap the hard hats back on.

“With how they’ve played and how we’ve been playing, we knew we could do it,” senior safety Josh Metellus said. “It doesn’t have to be close. If you execute the right way, every play or the majority, you can win by big margins like this. We’ve focused on executing these past two weeks, and it showed today.”

Following junior cornerback Ambry Thomas’ sideline interception off Lewerke, Patterson immediately struck back. He tossed a 19-yard swing pass to senior tight end Sean McKeon, sprung by Bell’s devastating block.

Patterson then hit Bell for 20 and Peoples-Jones for the final 19, the latter sweeping along the western sideline into the south end zone for the score to make it 24-7. Some 27:40 remained in the game, but the Spartans were absorbing the tip of the spear.

MSU’s Matt Coughlin got three back on a 35-yard field goal with 6:43 left in the third quarter. Nordin offset it precisely 4:30 later, knocking through a 27-yarder after Patterson throws of 27 yards to both redshirt sophomore wideout Tarik Black and McKeon set it up.

Michigan’s special teams then lent a big hand to the rout. Senior viper Khaleke Hudson coiled and struck, fighting off a block to fly in and block a MSU punt. That effort set the Wolverines up on MSU’s 22, and Patterson drove the spear home on the very next play.

He unleashed a throw down the middle to junior wideout Nico Collins. The lanky receiver enjoyed full leverage, leaving MSU’s defensive back a snowball’s chance in a pizza oven of knocking it away.

“We had a big blocked punt, multiple turnovers, Ambry on the pick,” Patterson said. “They’re always big time. They showed up today, put us in good positions, and we capitalized.”

At 34-10 and with 14:46 to play, it was all over but the cheap shots.

There were plenty of those, but the Wolverines kept rolling. An interception by senior cornerback Lavert Hill set up Nordin’s 33-yard field goal, with 10:12 remaining.

Then, just to pour a canister of Morton’s finest into an already gaping wound, Patterson flipped a toss to freshman wideout Cornelius Johnson for a 39-yard touchdown with 2:33 left. The Spartans were as far from the rookie as they are from respectability this season, leaving Johnson steaming away and leaving the Spartans themselves steaming.

“We wanted to go out there and score as many points as we could,” Patterson said. “That play was designed to end like that.”

So was the game, as far as the Wolverines were concerned. They tucked Paul away for another year, and noted his growing comfort in a place that served as his primary home for a good long while.

Michigan Wolverines Football Report Card: Grading U-M In A 44-10 Win

Chris Balas • TheWolverine

Grading all areas of the Michigan Wolverines’ 44-10 win over Michigan State:

Michigan Football Rushing Offense: C

It wasn’t good, but it didn’t need to be. Michigan’s run game Saturday was bubble screens to the wide receivers, which often went for nice gains. Freshman wide receiver Giles Jackson was actually the leading rusher with two carries for 32 yards on end arounds, while freshman Zach Charbonnet averaged 4.3 yards per carry on only seven attempts. Senior quarterback Shea Patterson grossed 28 yards on eight runs, including a 15-yarder that moved the chains.

The Wolverines did gross 133 yards, but netted just 83 with sack and TFL yardage figured into the equation.

Michigan Football Passing Offense: A

Patterson played his best game in improving to 2-0 in this rivalry, throwing for 384 yards. His 11.6 yards per attempt and 16.0 yards per completion were two of the key stats in this game, and his four touchdown passes were the difference.

U-M’s explosive plays were prevalent Saturday. Sophomore Ronnie Bell is developing into one of the Big Ten’s best receivers, and his 150 yards were a career high and included a 42-yarder. The Wolverines also had four other completions of 20 yards or more in Patterson’s big day.

Michigan Football Rushing Defense: A

Michigan State had no run game, as expected. Their top back, Elijah Collins, managed only 27 total yards, and quarterback Brian Lewerke was next at 12. The Wolverines dominated up front and allowed only one run of 10 yards or more, a 10-yarder to Julian Barnett.

Michigan State managed only 1.8 yards per carry and never got the running game going.

Michigan Football Passing Defense: A-

The Spartans struck early with a 29-yard touchdown pass from Lewerke to Cody White, but most of their other completions came underneath coverage other than a 20-yarder to tight end Matt Seybert. White was a one-man show and had success with his six catches for 78 yards, but it wasn’t nearly enough.

Michigan’s two interceptions, one each by senior Lavert Hill and junior Ambry Thomas, were game-changers. Lewerke averaged only 5.5 yards per attempt.

Michigan Football Special Teams: A-

Redshirt junior Quinn Nordin assumed the kicking duties this week, and he shined. His 49-yarder to put Michigan back up by three scores in the third quarter was one

of the underrated plays of the game, and his 28-yarder made it a two-score game just before the half. Sophomore Jake Moody put six of his nine kicks through the end zone for touchbacks, an underrated aspect on a cold day.

Junior Donovan Peoples-Jones' big 50-yard punt return resulted in a fumble, one of the few negatives for Michigan's special teams in a big win.

Offense Notes: Patterson Enjoys Career Day, Lights Up MSU Through The Air

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines' football team put on a passing clinic during Saturday afternoon's 44-10 blowout of Michigan State, with senior quarterback Shea Patterson compiling 384 passing yards and four touchdowns with no interceptions.

It was by far the best statistical game Patterson had ever enjoyed in a Michigan uniform, with the senior shattering his previous career high of 282 passing yards (set last year in a 42-21 win over Maryland), while also tossing four scores for the first time as a Wolverine (he had thrown three in a contest seven different times).

Not only did Patterson rack up the yards and touchdowns in Saturday's beatdown, but he was also efficient. He connected on 24 of his 33 passes, a 72.7 completion rate which is his second best of the season (trailing only the 73.9 connection percentage he posted in the 52-0 triumph over Rutgers on Sept. 28).

The senior's yardage total was very similar between the two halves (182 prior to the break and 202 after halftime), though three of his four scoring tosses occurred in the game's final two quarters.

Junior receiver Donovan Peoples-Jones (from 18 yards out), junior wideout Nico Collins (a 22-yard TD) and freshman receiver Cornelius Johnson (a 39-yard score) were the recipients of Patterson's three second-half scoring tosses, while redshirt junior tight end Nick Eubanks reeled in the lone one of the first half (from five yards out).

"He was really good all day, sharp in every way, whether he was seeing the field, making the throws, or picking up the third-and-29," head coach Jim Harbaugh said in the postgame. He complimented Patterson for completing passes to nine different receivers and breaking Tom Brady's old record for passing yards by a U-M quarterback against Michigan State.

Ronnie Bell Enjoys A Career Day As Well

Patterson wasn't the only offensive Wolverine who played the best game of his career on Saturday, with sophomore wideout Ronnie Bell setting new personal records as well.

He hauled in nine receptions for 150 yards, breaking his previous career highs of seven grabs (in the Sept. 7 win over Army) and 98 receiving yards (in the Oct. 12 triumph at Illinois).

The sophomore was Patterson's favorite target all afternoon, bringing in five more catches than anyone else (Peoples-Jones' four grabs were the next most on the team) and 102 more yards than any other U-M player (Peoples-Jones' 48 yards were also the second most).

Seven of Bell's nine catches and 118 of his 150 yards came in the first two quarters alone.

Despite the career effort, Bell failed to find the end zone once again and has yet to score his first TD of the season.

"[Senior safety] Josh [Metellus] let me know 20 seconds ago I still haven't got in there," Bell said with a laugh in the postgame presser. "It hurts every time. It's alright, though, because I'll get in there eventually."

"Ronnie Bell had a tremendous game," Harbaugh added. "He was all over the field — bubbles and then yards after the catch. [He was] running physical and tough on the boundary, not looking to step out of bounds and coming out the other side making the first downs.

"Over the middle, he was right in there making the tough plays and catches. He blocked really well, too. You're going to see a lot of really good blocks by Ronnie when he didn't have the ball.

"He just played really good and tough. He's a really good football player."

Miscellaneous Michigan Wolverines Football Notes

- Michigan's 467 total yards marked the fourth time in the last five games U-M eclipsed the 400-yard mark. The club's 384 passing yards were its most in a contest since compiling 387 in a 59-3 win over Maryland on Nov. 5, 2016.

Patterson's 384 marked the highest total for a U-M quarterback since Jake Rudock racked up 440 in a 48-41 double-overtime win at Indiana in 2015.

- Patterson now has 4,757 passing yards in his U-M career, which is good for 10th in school history. He needs only 103 more yards to tie Steve Smith (1980-83) for the No. 9 spot.

- Patterson's 24 completions tied a career best, with the senior also accomplishing the feat earlier this season in the Oct. 19 loss at Penn State (he went 24-of-41 passing against the Nittany Lions).

- Senior tight end Sean McKeon's 46 receiving yards were a season high and the

most he had recorded in a game since tallying 59 in the 14-10 loss to Michigan State on Oct. 7, 2017.

- Freshman wideout Giles Jackson was Michigan's leading rusher on Saturday with 32 yards on only two carries. Freshman running back Zach Charbonnet carried seven times for 30 yards, while redshirt freshman Hassan Haskins rushed six times for 13 yards and a score.

Michigan as a whole compiled 83 yards on the ground.

- U-M's 44 points were its most against MSU since its 45-37 triple-overtime victory over the Spartans in 2004.

- Johnson's 39-yard TD grab in the fourth quarter was the first score of his career, with the 39 total yards he accumulated also standing as a career best.

- Bell became the first Michigan player to tally 100 receiving yards in a game this season, with his 150 standing as the most for a U-M player since Amara Darboh logged 165 in a 32-23 triumph at MSU on Oct. 29, 2016. Bell's nine catches, meanwhile, were the most for a Wolverine since Jehu Chesson racked up 10 in a 48-41 triumph at Indiana on Nov. 14, 2015.

- Collins' 22-yard touchdown catch in the fourth quarter was his fourth score of the year and the 10th of his U-M tenure.

- Michigan extended its home-winning streak to 13 games, with its last loss in Ann Arbor occurring to Ohio State on Nov. 25, 2017.

- Patterson became the first Wolverine quarterback to toss four touchdowns in a game since Wilton Speight did so in a 51-14 blowout of UCF on Sept. 10, 2016.

- Senior running back Tru Wilson's 10 carries (for 26 yards) were tied for the second most he had ever registered in a game. He also carried 10 times in the Oct. 12 win at Illinois, and his career high was 11 in a 45-20 victory over SMU last season.

- U-M converted eight of its 13 third downs.

- Saturday afternoon was the first time the Maize and Blue threw three touchdown passes against Michigan State since Chad Henne did so in a 28-24 triumph in East Lansing in 2007.

- Peoples-Jones' 18-yard touchdown grab in the third quarter was his fourth of the season and the 12th of his career. It was also the second straight year he tallied a score against the Spartans, hauling in a 79-yarder in the 21-7 victory at MSU last season.

- Eubanks' five-yard TD reception in the second quarter was his fourth career score and third in his last four games.

Defense/Special Teams Notes: Michigan Shuts Down MSU's Offense (Again)

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

The Michigan Wolverines' football team turned in an elite defensive performance last season in East Lansing when it held MSU to just 94 yards of offense in a 21-7 win, and although Saturday's 44-10 victory didn't quite live up to those standards, it was once again dominant.

The Maize and Blue only gave up 220 yards of offense to Michigan State, holding it to 166 through the air and 54 on the ground.

MSU's lone touchdown of the game came on its second offensive series when it drove 60 plays in nine yards, but saw the Wolverine defense clamp down after that.

"It wasn't over, and it was only the first quarter," senior viper Khaleke Hudson recalled in the postgame. "Why feel pressure when they went up by a touchdown? We just anchored down, kept executing and continued doing our jobs to come out with the victory."

The Spartans were forced to punt on six of their 10 possessions after that, with the four other series resulting in two interceptions (one by senior cornerback Lavert Hill and one from junior cornerback Ambry Thomas), a 35-yard field goal and the end of the first half.

The two interceptions are what really helped break the game open, with Thomas' occurring on MSU's first drive of the second half and leading to a Michigan touchdown that gave the Wolverines a 24-7 lead.

Hill's meanwhile, came at 14:14 of the fourth quarter and resulted in a 33-yard field goal by redshirt junior kicker Quinn Nordin to extend U-M's advantage to 37-10.

"Ambry is from Detroit, so the Michigan rivalry is really big to him," senior safety Josh Metellus noted after the win. "It's also big for Lavert [another Detroit native]. He got the pick and you could feel the intensity. The vibe he had went through the whole stadium, from the field to the stands to the top row."

The Maize and Blue's defensive front made life especially difficult for the Spartan rushing attack, holding it to just 1.8 yards per attempt. Redshirt freshman running back Elijah Collins' 27 yards made him the only Michigan State rusher to compile more than 12 yards on the ground, with the team's longest run standing at just 10 yards.

U-M fifth-year senior linebacker Jordan Glasgow led the way with eight tackles, while senior defensive tackle Carlo Kemp paced the team in both sacks and TFLs, with 1.5 of each.

Quinn Nordin, Khaleke Hudson Shine On Michigan Special Teams

Though Michigan special teams coach Chris Partridge revealed during the week that Nordin and sophomore kicker Jake Moody would continue to be used on a rotational basis, it was the former who received the entirety of the kicking action on Saturday.

He attempted (and made) all three of the club's field goals, while also receiving the nod for all five of the Wolverines' extra points.

Nordin's three successful kicks came from 28, 49 and 33 yards, marking the first time he had connected on three kicks in a game since also doing so in the 38-13 blow-out of Wisconsin last season.

Hudson, meanwhile, blocked a Michigan State punt at the MSU 22-yard line at 14:53 of the fourth quarter, leading to a touchdown pass on U-M's ensuing offensive play to extend the lead to 34-10 at the time.

"It's about max focus and executing your job," Hudson explained. "There were two punts I had come close to blocking before, and I knew on the third one that my guy was going to over pursue.

"I went under him and kept my eyes on the ball, and ended up blocking it."

One of the few negatives for the Wolverines' special teams unit occurred at 8:21 of the fourth quarter when junior wideout Donovan Peoples-Jones fumbled the ball at the end of a 50-yard punt return, which led to a Michigan State recovery.

It was Michigan's lone turnover of the day.

Miscellaneous Michigan Football Notes

- Michigan has held five of its last seven opponents to 65 rushing yards or fewer after limiting MSU to just 54.
- In U-M's last seven games, its defense has only surrendered 11 touchdowns and has forced 12 turnovers.
- The Wolverines' 34-point margin of victory was its largest over the Spartans since a 49-3 beatdown in 2002.
- U-M limited Michigan State to 1.8 yards per rush, and has now held six of its 10 opponents to 2.8 yards per carry or fewer this season.
- Thomas' third-quarter interception was his third of the season and the fourth of his U-M tenure. It was also the fifth turnover he had registered this season, adding two fumble recoveries to the picks.
- After giving up just 10 points to Michigan State, the Maize and Blue have allowed an average of 10.3 points over their last three outings (victories over Notre Dame, Maryland and MSU).
- Kemp's fourth-quarter sack was the first solo QB takedown of his career. He posted 1.5 on the afternoon and now has two over his last two games.
- Michigan State only converted two of its 13 third downs.
- Hill's fourth-quarter interception was his third of the season and sixth of his career.
- MSU's 17 pass completions were its second fewest of the season.
- Michigan improved to 71-36-5 in the all-time series with the Spartans, dating back

to the first meeting in 1898. Saturday's triumph also marked the first time U-M had beaten MSU in consecutive years since 2006-07.

- Hudson's blocked punt in the fourth quarter was the third of his collegiate tenure. It was also the team's second of the season, with Glasgow recording the other in the Oct. 12 win at Illinois.
- The 111,496 people in attendance marked the 292nd consecutive game at Michigan Stadium with a crowd of at least 100,000 people.
- Nordin's 49-yard field goal in the third quarter was the third longest of his career, with his two longer ones both occurring in the club's 33-17 victory over Florida in 2017 (from 50 and 55 yards out against the Gators).
- The Wolverines' victory was the first for the home team in the rivalry since Michigan State pulled out a 35-11 win in East Lansing in 2014.
- U-M has limited nine of its 10 opponents to 293 yards of offense or fewer this season, with the lone exception being the Sept. 21 loss at Wisconsin, when it gave up 487.
- Hill's third-quarter pass breakup gave him 25 for his career, tying him with Markus Curry (2001-04) for ninth on the school's all-time list.

Michigan Wolverines Football: Top Five Players Of The Game

John Borton • The Wolverine

Michigan's Spartan scorching featured no lack of heroes, a fact Jim Harbaugh himself enthusiastically pointed out. Here are the top five players of the 44-10 win.

- 1. Senior quarterback Shea Patterson:** Michigan's triggerman became the most lethal weapon in the history of U-M quarterbacks versus the Spartans. Patterson's 384 yards through the air outdid Tom Brady's previous record by 99 yards, and Patterson also gunned four TD tosses.
- 2. Sophomore wide receiver Ronnie Bell:** Bell found himself on the receiving end of nine Patterson aerials, good for a career-best 150 yards. The sophomore also rang a few bells while blocking, springing his teammates for even more yards.
- 3. Junior cornerback Ambry Thomas:** Thomas tied for second on the team with six stops, including a tackle for loss, against the Spartans. He also came up with one of the two Michigan interceptions, helping fuel the Wolverines' second-half pull-away.
- 4. Senior viper Khaleke Hudson:** Hudson proved another key part of a swarming Michigan defense, with five stops and strong coverage. But he also set up a touchdown, flying in and blocking a punt to set Michigan's offense up at the MSU 22.

5. Junior wide receiver Donovan Peoples-Jones: Peoples-Jones came up with four catches for 48 yards, including a touchdown, for the Wolverines. He served among nine receiving targets that nearly cracked the 400-yard mark, and added a 50-yard punt return (though he did fumble at the end of it).

Wolverine Watch: Shea Patterson Delivers An Old-Style Spartan Spearing

John Borton • The Wolverine

"I wish I had two more shots at them. I wish I had started out here and had four shots at them. It was a lot of fun today."

— Senior quarterback Shea Patterson

Michigan State doesn't wish that. The Spartans were as far from beating Patterson and the Wolverines on Saturday as Paul Bunyan is from being Pauly Shore.

With the senior slinging and Michigan's defense stinging, a capacity crowd in The Big House lived out their return-to-domination dream.

This wasn't Devin Gardner, running for his life against a horde of Spartans bent on dismemberment. This wasn't Denard Robinson, trying to retain his head while William Gholston used it as a twist top.

This wasn't even Michigan of the early 2000s, having to go three overtimes to outlast this Spartans, or rallying for a cliffhanger win in 2007. This was a thumping. This was a 44-10 beat-down, the Wolverines' most resounding victory over their sass-saturated siblings since 2002, a 49-3 payback pummeling for Spartan Bob's theft a year earlier.

Patterson became the delivery mode, and he didn't mind one bit. In a series often determined by the best rushing attack, Patterson scorched the skies. His 384 yards and four TDs passing shot down the Spartans, a Michigan record by a quarterback in this series.

The senior and his receivers — most notably sophomore Ronnie Bell, with nine catches for 150 yards — weren't playing around. If Bell would have snagged one more 17-yard catch, he'd have out-done MSU quarterback Brian Lewerke's entire receiving corps.

Patterson got all that done while keeping his head — literally and figuratively. He got nailed on a late hit once, but hit back, legally, over and over again.

"Any time you play in a rivalry game, and stuff gets out of hand, and you dominate them, that's kind of what's going to happen on the other side," he said of the roughing-the-passer penalty. "We were ready for that, and it didn't faze me."

Nothing fazed the Wolverines, who watched MSU pile up unsportsmanlike conduct and personal foul penalties like Paul Bunyan stacking wood. Senior safety Josh Metellus —

part of a defense limiting MSU to 10 points and 220 yards — shrugged it off like an anticipated annoyance.

He couldn't resist, though, tossing in a late jab after the final whistle.

"We're way classier than them," Metellus offered. "They try to take it to a level of not playing football. We play football, I don't know what they do over there. It showed today.

"Our side, it was real physical. This defense made a statement today and were playing real physical. We were playing too physical, and they tried to do stuff after the play when we weren't looking. It just showed we were the better prepared team, and we wanted to execute more than they did."

Yes, Michigan State isn't very good at this point. The Spartans have lost five straight games, averaged 12.2 points per game in that horrible handful, and have reached the nadir of Dantonio's once-proud tenure there.

Yes, they have injuries and other personnel defections. Their best linebacker is done for the year for failing a drug test and allegedly using a banned performance-enhancing substance.

Maybe if he'd been on hand, MSU could have held Patterson to 350 yards through the air. And the other Spartans weren't nearly enhanced enough.

Dantonio, not shockingly, felt the whistle blew a little too early and too often for the Spartans.

"I'm disappointed in those [after-the-whistle penalties], because we talk about keeping our composure," he said. "I think the game was called close. It was called close by the referees, because of everything that has gone into this game."

Well, whose fault is that? When you enter a jewelry store often enough with clubs, brass knuckles, ski masks and a huge sack tossed over your shoulder, somebody's going to start hitting the silent alarm.

Someone asked Dantonio if losing to the Wolverines might "reinvigorate" him. Credit where credit is due. Dantonio neither used his new favorite line ("Next question.") nor drew a roughing-the-questioner call.

"I don't like losing to these guys," he said. "I don't think you've got to reinvigorate me. I don't like losing, period."

He's had to get used to it this year, and his team may have to get used to it at a higher rate than they've experienced over the past decade in this series. His counterpart certainly knows the score.

"It's a big game," Jim Harbaugh said. "It's for the state championship, 112th version. Now, our team, everybody that's in the locker room, has the advantage. The fifth-year seniors are 3-2, the seniors are 3-1, the juniors are 2-1, the sophomores are 2-0 and the freshmen are 1-0. Big program win. It makes me very happy."

It almost sounds like the world has spun itself aright again. All that remained were some unsentimental goodbyes.

Asked about his postgame words for the Spartans, Metellus mentioned nothing about the sweet sorrow of parting.

“I was telling them to go home,” he said. “It’s time for them to leave. They didn’t deserve to be in our stadium. I was waving them goodbye because some wanted to stay on the field, and it was our time to shine. We came out with the ‘W’ so I was telling them to go home.”

They went home — without Paul Bunyan, without a win since September and without a victory over a quarterback they mocked upon his arrival. Patterson wishes he had more cracks at them, all right.

He’s got plenty of company there.

What They’re Saying: Michigan Wolverines Football 44, Michigan State 10

Ryan Tice • TheWolverine

Here’s a look around the internet and what the media is saying about the Wolverines’ 44-10 rivalry win over Michigan State, head coach Jim Harbaugh, quarterback Shea Patterson and much more:

Chris Balas, TheWolverine.com: Notes, Quotes & Observations

Regardless, if it wasn’t clear before where this rivalry was trending, it’s obvious now. That’s three out of four, the one loss a five-turnover game with a backup quarterback in a monsoon, and — barring something unforeseen given the trajectories of the two programs — more on the way.

Dantonio’s gone the last several years seeming to crave Harbaugh’s attention. In yet another case of “be careful what you wish for,” he got it.

“It’s a big game; it’s for the state championship, 112th version,” Harbaugh said. “Now, our team — everybody that’s in the locker room — has the advantage. Fifth-year seniors are 3-2, the seniors are 3-2, the juniors are 2-1, the sophomores are 2-0 and the freshmen are 1-0.

“Big program win. It makes me very happy.”

By the fourth quarter, all the Spartans had left in the tank were cheap shots and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties after the whistle, including defensive lineman Jacob Panasiuk hammering Patterson and being ejected for a late hit several seconds after U-M’s quarterback released the ball. It was a throwback to the John L. Smith, Muddy Waters, late George Perles, Bobby Williams eras in which overmatched MSU teams took out their frustrations by getting in their licks when they didn’t matter, when the game was no longer in doubt.

Michigan players, meanwhile, waved their goodbyes and celebrated.

Tom Fornelli, CBS Sports: Wolverines dominate with most points vs. Spartans since 2004

2. Michigan might be the second-best team in the Big Ten: I know Minnesota entered this weekend with a perfect record. I know Penn State beat Michigan earlier this season. I know Wisconsin steamrolled the Wolverines in September. I know, I know, I know, but if the season were to start over right now with the way Michigan is playing, who are you taking against it? The defense has been phenomenal, and the offense has started to click. Hell, Michigan nearly beat Penn State in Beaver Stadium. If not for a dropped touchdown by Ronnie Bell, the Wolverines might win that game in overtime.

The Michigan team we’ve seen over the last 3.5 games is the team most people expected to see coming into the 2019 season. It’s not on the same level as Ohio State, but nobody in the Big Ten is. Few teams in the country are. But right now, this Wolverines squad looks like the second-best team in the conference to me.

Bob Wojnowski, The Detroit News: Wolverines back in charge, Dantonio’s Spartans back in turmoil

Peoples-Jones’ 18-yarder early in the third quarter was the big one, flipping a relatively tight 17-7 halftime score to 24-7. After he scored, he struck his Paul Bunyan pose, just as he did in the 21-7 victory last year in East Lansing. The big ol’ ugly trophy remains in Ann Arbor, and so does the swagger. As badly as Michigan State beat its rival during an eight-year stretch, winning seven, the Wolverines felt entitled to a payback, and they delivered in full.

Leading 37-10, Harbaugh kept most of his starters in, and Patterson executed a fake run and threw to Johnson, a freshman, for a 39-yard touchdown with 2:33 left. Patterson admitted the play was designed to be a pass — “Yeah, we wanted to go out here and score as many points as we could” — and no apologies were necessary.

You know who, deep down, might have respected that punctuation pile-on? Perhaps Dantonio himself. At the height of Michigan State’s power in 2014, the Spartans punched in a touchdown with 28 seconds left to complete a 35-11 rout of Michigan. The Wolverines had made the mistake of firing a railroad spike into the Spartan Stadium turf before the game, and a half-seething, half-smirking Dantonio afterward declared, “It just felt like we needed to put a stake in them at that point.”

That probably explains why the Spartans had little to say in response to this score. They couldn’t gripe about something they’ve done themselves, and Dantonio wasn’t in a combative mood anyhow.

Rainer Sabin, Detroit Free Press: Michigan football’s win over Michigan State proves the offseason mattered for both

It was a win 10 months in the making, created by the actions of victors and the inertia of the vanquished.

There was Michigan football, zipping from one end of the field to another, displaying speed in space as it never had before.

There was Michigan State football, stuck in neutral, sputtering along and barred from the end zone for the final 46 minutes of a 44-10 loss to its rival.

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There was Jim Harbaugh, beaming a smile and telling everyone afterwards he was “happy.”

There was Mark Dantonio, frowning, expressing his disappointment.

On Jan. 10, one coach elected to modernize his offense by hiring an outsider with new ideas. That very same day, the other opted to keep his staff intact, shuffle the roles of his assistants and hope for a revival that would lead to increased productivity.

The 112th edition of the state’s biggest rivalry served as a referendum for both coaches’ decisions.

And Harbaugh came out the winner.

Marlowe Alter, Detroit Free Press: Michigan football eliminated from Big Ten title contention. Here’s Rose Bowl path

As for bowl games, Michigan still has an outside chance at the Rose Bowl.

They’ll need the winner of the Big Ten to make the College Football Playoff, therefore allowing the Rose Bowl to select the second-best Big Ten team. And if two-loss Michigan is up against two-loss Penn State/Ohio State, two-loss Minnesota or two-loss Wisconsin, the Wolverines could make the case to be selected.

To make that case, Michigan would have to win out, including beating Ohio State on Nov. 30 for the first time in the Jim Harbaugh era, but hope either one-loss Penn State, one-loss Ohio State or one-loss Minnesota win the Big Ten championship game convincingly, therefore being picked over other one-loss college football teams by the CFP committee.

If no Big Ten team makes the four-team CFP, the league winner will go to the Rose Bowl, sending Michigan to either the Outback Bowl or Holiday Bowl.

Angelique S. Chengelis, The Detroit News: ‘It’s time for them to leave’: Rivalry’s scrappiness spills over with some parting shots

After the 14th-ranked Wolverines pounded in-state rivals Michigan State, 44-10, Metellus thought it was time the Spartans should be heading up the tunnel and back to East Lansing.

“I was telling them to go home, that it’s time for them to leave,” said Metellus, tied for second on the team with six tackles against MSU. “They didn’t deserve to be in our stadium. I was trying to wave them goodbye because some of them wanted to stay on the field, and it was our time to shine. We came out with the ‘W,’ so we was just telling them to go home.”

As Michigan-Michigan State games always are, this one was physical, with extra hitting and extra trash-talking. Michigan was penalized nine times for 91 yards and MSU seven times for 93.

“I feel like we’re way more classier than them,” Metellus said. “They tried to take it to a level that wasn’t playing football. We play football over here. I don’t know what they do over there, but we play football, and it showed today.

“I felt like this defense, we made a statement today. We were playing real physical. It was to the point where we were playing too physical and they tried to do stuff after the play when we weren’t looking and stuff like that. It just showed today we were the better-prepared team and we came out and we wanted to execute more than they did.”