

NOV. 23, 2019 ♦ MICHIGAN AT INDIANA

Game Info

Site: at Memorial Stadium (52,626)

Kickoff: 3:30 p.m.

Television: ESPN

Radio: Michigan/IMG Radio Network (950 AM in the Detroit Area; SiriusXM channel 81) with Dan Dierdorf, Jim Brandstatter and sideline reporter Doug Karsch, a regular contributor to TheWolverine.com.

Series Facts: The Wolverines hold a 58-9 advantage in the all-time series against the Hoosiers and haven't lost since 1987 ... Michigan's .866 winning percentage against IU marks its best against any conference foe ... U-M is 18-1 at Memorial Stadium ... Former Wolverines Mike Hart (running backs/assistant head coach) and Nick Sheridan (tight ends) are on the IU coaching staff ... Michigan is listed No. 12 in the AP and coaches' polls, while it checks in at No. 13 in the College Football Playoff rankings.

Previewing Indiana With A Hoosier Insider

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

Taylor Lehman of TheHoosier.com was kind enough to swing by this week and break down Indiana's strengths and weaknesses prior to its game against the Michigan Wolverines' football team on Saturday.

Lehman revealed how he sees this weekend's contest playing out between the two clubs, and whether or not the Hoosiers finally have what it takes to grab a big victory against the Maize and Blue.

INDIANA'S PROJECTED STARTERS ON OFFENSE:

• **Redshirt junior QB Peyton Ramsey** — His 72.7 completion percentage is the best in the Big Ten and fourth best in all of college football, and he has also accumulated a 10-3 touchdown-to-interception ratio and 1,673 passing yards this year. Ramsey has only started four games but has taken over as the team's primary quarterback once it was announced that redshirt freshman Michael Penix (six starts) would miss the rest of the season on Nov. 5.

• **Sophomore RB Stevie Scott** — His 791 yards are the fourth most in the conference and his nine touchdowns are tied for fifth most. Scott is also averaging 4.8 yards per carry, and is the only Hoosier with more than 153 rushing yards on the year.

• **Junior WR Whop Philyor** — He is Indiana's best wideout and one of the best pass catchers in the league, with his 61 receptions checking in second in the Big Ten and his 863 yards third. Philyor was injured in last week's loss at Penn State, however, and is

questionable for Saturday; Lehman revealed that freshman David Ellis will start in his place if he's not able to go.

• **Fifth-year senior WR Nick Westbrook** — He is fourth on the team in both catches and yards, with 31 and 387, respectively. Westbrook is averaging 12.4 yards per catch, and his four receiving TDs are tied with redshirt sophomore tight end Peyton Hendershot for the team lead.

• **Fifth-year senior WR Donovan Hale** — He has hauled in 21 receptions for 367 yards, and his 17.4 yards per grab is the highest average on the team. Hale has eclipsed 98 yards in two games this season, and poses a mismatch problem at 6-4, 218.

• **Redshirt sophomore TE Peyton Hendershot** — He is second in the Big Ten among tight ends in both receptions and yards, hauling in 36 of the former and 444 of the latter. Hendershot has been a consistent target in IU's passing game all year, compiling at least 51 yards in five of the Hoosiers' 10 affairs.

• **Freshman LT Matthew Bedford** — He has started Indiana's last six clashes at left tackle, playing at least 60 snaps in all six. Bedford has struggled mightily according to Pro Football Focus (PFF), however, with his 51.9 overall grade (64 is considered average) checking in 38th out of the 42 Hoosier players who have seen the field on offense in 2019.

• **Junior LG Harry Crider** — His 703 snaps are the most of any Indiana offensive athlete, but like Bedford, PFF has also tabbed him as a below average lineman with an overall mark of 57. The outlet has tagged him with a 66.6 tally as a pass blocker, but only a 50.9 grade as a run blocker.

• **Fifth-year senior C Hunter Littlejohn** — The veteran has played in 33 games since the start of the 2017 campaign, and was named to the Rimington Trophy (given annually to the nation's best center) watch list heading into this year. His fifth-year senior season has not lived up to the hype according to PFF, however, with the publication placing just a 61.6 mark on him in 2019.

• **Fifth-year senior RG Simon Stepaniak** — His 69.3 tally is the best of any Hoosier offensive lineman on the team. Stepaniak has started 29 outings since the beginning of his redshirt freshman campaign in 2016, and has appeared in a total of 38 affairs since then.

• **Redshirt sophomore RT Caleb Jones** — He has performed admirably in his first season as a starter, with his 700 snaps ranking second most on the IU offense and his 67 PFF tally second among Hoosier linemen. At 6-8, 358 pounds, Jones is both the tallest and the heaviest player on the roster.

INDIANA'S PROJECTED STARTERS ON DEFENSE:

• **Sophomore DE James Head** — He has logged four tackles for loss and 2.5 sacks, and his five quarterback hurries are tied for the team lead. PFF has pegged him as the best pass rusher of any Hoosier defensive lineman, awarding him with a 74 mark in that department.

• **Redshirt junior DT Jerome Johnson** — He has posted 3.5 stops behind the line of scrimmage and two sacks, to go along with 28 total tackles. PFF has him tabbed as the second best starter on Indiana’s defense with a 73.5 mark.

• **Sophomore DT Demarcus Elliott** — His 391 snaps are the fourth most on IU’s defense and are second on the d-line behind Johnson’s 413. Elliott’s five tackles for loss are tied for the third most on the team and his three sacks are deadlocked for second.

• **Junior DE Michael Ziemba** — Though he is still searching for his first quarterback takedown, Ziemba’s 5.5 tackles for loss are the second most on the club’s roster. PFF has him slotted as an outstanding run defender with a 72.7 tally.

• **Sophomore LB Micah McFadden** — He leads the team in both tackles and TFLs, with 46 and 7.5, respectively. PFF has also been high on McFadden in 2019, giving him a 69.8 grade and an 81.5 mark as a pass rusher (third highest on the defense).

• **Fifth-year senior LB Reakwon Jones** — His 43 stops are second only to McFadden’s 46, and he has also chipped in 1.5 tackles for loss and a sack. Jones’ play has been slightly below average according to PFF, however, with the outlet slapping him with a 63.7 tally.

• **Redshirt junior LB Marcelino Ball** — Lehman has him tabbed as playing the Hoosiers’ ‘husky’ position, serving as a hybrid linebacker/defensive back. Ball’s 38 tackles are the fourth most for Indiana and his five quarterback hurries are tied with Head for the club lead.

• **Freshman CB Tiawan Mullen** — He was rated as a four-star out of high school and earned his first start in the Oct. 12 win over Rutgers, and has held onto the starting job in the four contests since. PFF has Mullen rated as a freshman sensation, with his 81.4 grade standing as the highest of any projected Hoosier defensive starter.

• **Sophomore CB Jaylin Williams** — His three pass breakups are tied for the second most on IU’s team, behind only Mullen’s eight. PFF has awarded Williams with an impressive 73.4 coverage mark on the year.

• **Senior S Khalil Bryant** — His 41 stops are the third most for Indiana and are 14 more than any other Hoosier defensive back. PFF has selected Bryant as the club’s best tackler, giving him an 88.4 tally in that area.

• **Sophomore S Devon Matthews** — Lehman revealed that redshirt sophomore Juwan Burgess could potentially start here as well, citing the two ‘rotate often.’ PFF is higher on the latter, pegging him with a 68 overall grade and the former a 61.9.

INDIANA’S PROJECTED STARTERS ON SPECIAL TEAMS:

• **Fifth-year senior K Logan Justus** — He is a perfect 14-for-14 on the year, and has converted all three of his attempts from beyond 40 yards. Justus is one of only five qualifying kickers in college football who still holds a 100 percent success rate on field goals (kickers must have played in at least 75 percent of their team’s games and have a minimum of one field goal attempt per contests played in order to qualify).

• **Fifth-year senior P Haydon Whitehead** — He is averaging 41.2 yards on 39 punts this season, with the former statistic standing seventh best in the Big Ten. Whitehead has recorded six punts of 50 yards or longer, and has dropped 19 of his attempts inside the opponent’s 20-yard line.

INDIANA’S BIGGEST STRENGTH ON OFFENSE:

“The strength of this Indiana offense lies in first-year offensive coordinator Kalen DeBoer’s innovative system,” Lehman revealed.

“I know that seems expansive, but it relies heavily on passing. Anyone who hasn’t watched this Indiana team believes it’s one dimensional, but that’s not true either.

“The way it works depends on short passing routes that spread out the defense and force one-on-one matchups or give the receivers opportunities for yards after the catch with receivers blocking downfield.

“It really takes a lot of pressure off the offensive line and depends on a quarterback that can make quick decisions.

“Mike Penix ran it well when he was quarterback, and Peyton Ramsey is running it well now.

“Indiana has big-bodied receivers that often win those one-on-ones and can run in space on the underneath routes.

“Stevie Scott must be accounted for as well. He runs with power but also works best in space and can split out wide and work as a receiver.

“He’s probably the most balanced running back Indiana has had since maybe Stephen Houston.

“He’s on his way to another 1,000-yard season as a sophomore.”

INDIANA’S BIGGEST WEAKNESS ON OFFENSE:

“The weakness of the offense can also be found in the offensive line,” the writer explained.

“[Head coach] Tom Allen said the one guy they couldn’t afford to lose this year was [senior] left tackle Coy Cronk, yet that’s what happened earlier this season.

“Freshman Matt Bedford has filled in really well given the circumstances, but if Indiana is put in scenarios where it needs to rely on the offensive line to win at the line of scrimmage in order to move the ball, it won’t be pretty.

“I will say, since getting past the early running game struggles and implementing this offensive system, the only team Indiana has not moved the ball on at will was Ohio State.

“Even Penn State couldn’t smother the DeBoer system, so I’m excited to see how Michigan fares.”

Despite the loss of Cronk on the offensive line, IU has done a respectable job at not allowing opponents into its backfield.

It has surrendered just 15 sacks on the year (which ranks 28th in the country) and 53 tackles for loss (tied for 44th nationally).

The front five has had a rougher go of it in the run blocking department, however, with the club's 3.83 yards per carry tying for 99th in college football.

INDIANA'S BIGGEST STRENGTH ON DEFENSE:

"Its strength is always different," Lehman noted. "The largest pool of talent is in the secondary, but there isn't a lot of experience to go along with it.

"The linebackers are split, with a fifth-year linebacker in Reakwon Jones and a sophomore in Micah McFadden.

"The rotation of defensive linemen have been extremely consistent so far. I tell everyone that I've never seen a defense grow so much as the season has gone along as this defense has.

"Every week it seems better, which bodes well for the future. They haven't played a team with the stable of receivers that Michigan has, though, so that'll be something new this year."

IU's front seven ranks 46th nationally against the run, allowing 139.7 rushing yards per game.

The Hoosiers' secondary stands as one of the best in the country, though, yielding just 176.6 passing yards per outing (10th best).

Opponents are only completing 54.7 percent of their throws against Indiana (19th), with six different foes having connected on 50 percent of their passes or fewer against the Hoosiers this season.

IU has also held four of the 10 teams it has faced to 112 yards through the air or less.

INDIANA'S BIGGEST WEAKNESS ON DEFENSE:

"This seems to change every week," the insider said. "The defense is so young. The best cover guy is freshman Tiawan Mullen, and he has silenced some good pass catchers, including Michigan State's [fifth-year senior wideout] Darrell Stewart.

"But there's so much pressure for the defensive staff to get every player into the correct position.

"It always seems pretty fragile, but I've been waiting for it to break for weeks now, and it hasn't.

"Not even against Penn State. There were some rough plays involving bad communication on the field against Michigan State, and [Penn State redshirt sophomore quarterback] Sean Clifford was able to break off some big runs last week.

"Its inexperience is probably the biggest weakness."

Though IU's defense ranks 18th nationally in yards allowed per game (316.3), it has let three different opponents eclipse 444 yards, including two who went over the 513-yard plateau.

Michigan State racked up 445 yards on Sept. 28, while Ohio State posted 520 yards on Sept. 14 and Nebraska 514 on Oct. 26.

Six of Indiana's 10 opponents have logged 371 yards or more against it this season.

LEHMAN'S FINAL SCORE PREDICTION:

"I believe it will be higher scoring than what is expected," Lehman opined. "I believe **Michigan will win another close one, 34-31.**

"I think this game will come down to a field goal with scores above 30. Indiana has been limited to fewer than 30 points just twice – Ohio State and Penn State – and I think there's a desire to really get that one win to make this season more memorable.

"I think [U-M senior quarterback] Shea Patterson will find some success, and that's dangerous for Indiana, but I don't think Michigan will be able to slow the Indiana offense like some assume it will.

"There's just something about Kalen DeBoer and Peyton Ramsey that doesn't die."

Michigan Wolverines Football At Indiana — Keys To the Game

Chris Balas • The Wolverine

This is not your father's Indiana team ...

Well, actually, it might be, depending on how old you are. Tom Allen's Hoosiers are reminiscent of some of head coach Bill Mallory's teams back in the 1980s and early '90s in that they have some talent, they play hard and they have a winning record.

In fact, they're assured to finish with their first winning season since 2007, when they went 7-6 with a loss in the Insight Bowl under Bill Lynch.

Indiana hasn't beaten Michigan since 1987, the longest any Big Ten opponent has gone without a win over the Wolverines. Interestingly, though, there's been only one blowout since a 34-3 victory in Bloomington in 2006, and that was a 34-10 victory in 2014.

There have been a pair of overtime wins and several fourth-quarter games in the last eight meetings, so the Hoosiers probably won't be intimidated heading into this one.

Here's what Michigan has to do to win in Bloomington and improve to 9-2 heading into the finale with Ohio State:

Be gap sound on defense: Indiana's passing game hasn't slowed since backup Peyton Ramsey, who has had some success against Michigan in the past, replaced injured Michael Penix Jr. (collarbone) in the starting lineup. Ramsey, in fact, threw for 371 yards and completed 75.6 percent of his passes against a solid Penn State defense last week ... and on the road, no less.

The Hoosiers, though, become much more difficult to defend when running back Stevie Scott gets loose like he did last year. He put up 139 yards on the Wolverines in Ann Arbor, and he's a big back capable of breaking tackles and keeping the chains moving. Give him a crease and he'll pick up yards in chunks.

Slowing IU's potent passing game starts with making the Hoosiers one-dimensional and putting their offense in second- and third-and-long situations. That requires getting off blocks and being where you're supposed to be on defense, something the Wolverines have done extremely well over the last several weeks.

Scott hasn't been a factor against the three toughest defenses he's faced, managing 1.5 yards per carry against Ohio State, 3.7 at Michigan State and 3.2 at Penn State. The Wolverines need to make that continue.

Pressure Peyton Ramsey and make him uncomfortable: This one's easier said than done. Ramsey has been fantastic when called upon this year — and as evidenced by his showing at Penn State, he's not just padding his stats against poor defensive teams. He was harassed by Ohio State's outstanding defense and sacked five times but still managed to complete 19 of 33 passes for 162 yards.

Ramsey has thrown for 1,673 yards, 10 touchdowns and only three interceptions this season, and he's now completing 72.7 percent of his passes. According to the Indianapolis Star, that's put him within striking distance of Dan Persa's (Northwestern) single-season Big Ten record (73.5).

Were Ramsey's career to end today, he'd own the league's career completion percentage record by 2.5 percent (67.4 to 64.9) over Iowa's Chuck Long, a mid-1980s standout.

In short, letting him get comfortable given the outstanding receivers the Hoosiers feature — Whop Philyor has 61 catches for 863 yards, while Ty Fryfogle boasts 38 for 502, and both average over 13 yards per reception — could result in a long day. U-M has done a better job against the crossing routes IU burned the Wolverines with a year ago, but the Hoosiers are in the top 25 percent nationally in protecting the quarterback, allowing only 1.5 sacks per game (tied for 31st nationally).

This will be a challenge for the defense.

Be balanced on offense and convert on third down: The Hoosiers are 10th nation-

ally in pass defense, allowing only 176.6 yards per game. At the same time, they're also allowing a respectable 139.7 yards on the ground (46th in the land) and limiting explosive plays, atypical from years past.

Indiana is 12th nationally in plays allowed of 10 or more yards (104) and 20th in 20-plus yarders allowed (36). The Wolverines might have to string some drives together the way Penn State did in its win, including an 18-play, nine-minute beauty to put the game away. That will require U-M to be effective on third down like they were against Michigan State, when they converted on eight of 13.

The Breakdown: Michigan Wolverines Football at Indiana

One thing seems pretty certain about this Indiana team — it's improving, and there are playmakers on both sides of the ball. In the past, the Hoosiers might have a few guys to key on ... now it's a handful, and in a way it's now "pick your poison" even with Penix out, Ramsey in.

"If you don't see it, I think you're not paying much attention," Allen said of his team's resurgence. "I think there's no doubt. Get on the road and those are tough places to play, and we're right there.

"You talk about the progress you go through and how you build a program. This season we won games in the past that we've not been able to finish against other teams, and now we're playing highly ranked teams and are right there with them, as well. It doesn't have the same feel to me."

Michigan needs to continue to play well in order to cover the seven-point spread. Play a bad game and an upset would certainly be possible.

News & Views: Jim Harbaugh on 'Taunting,' Indiana And More

Chris Balas • TheWolverine

Michigan football head coach Jim Harbaugh met with the media Monday and had plenty to say on a variety of topics. We tackle his opinions here with our own in News & Views:

NEWS: Redshirt junior Tarik Black was flagged for a celebration penalty Saturday after one of his bigger plays of the year, a catch on the sideline after which he celebrated with a flex.

HARBAUGH: “I’d be curious to know [why he was flagged], as well. Emphasis is made at ‘not [taunting] at a player,’ but that certainly wasn’t at an opposing player. It would be good to get some clarity.”

VIEWS: First off, can this kid catch a break? Yeah, Black has struggled with his attitude at times this season in the wake of a disappointing few years, but that was a terrible call made by a sideline official who also threw the flag (without a warning first) on a huge punt return by Donovan Peoples-Jones. Peoples-Jones fumbled, but had he gone the distance it would have come back ... and it’s not as though Harbaugh was all that close to the field.

Second — you see things like that flex all the time — usually much worse than that — not flagged. Either call them all or don’t call any.

And finally, Bo Schembechler used to insist that if you were going to celebrate, you were going to do it with everyone on the team. His point — a lot of people had to do their jobs, too, to make your play happen.

We like that idea best. Call us old school (or maybe just old).

NEWS: Senior viper Khaleke Hudson blocked yet another punt Saturday, this one leading directly to a touchdown on the next play.

HARBAUGH: “He does have a knack. It starts with really good technique he’s developed, really good coaching of that technique. A lot of times when you go against a shield punt where they have two or three blockers, you’re trying to outman them by one and don’t know who of those three or four the three are going to block ... who is going to come free.”

VIEWS: So it’s not just the luck of a good break off the line. You have to read and react, and Hudson has it down. It’s been huge, and a big reason why the Wolverines’ special teams have been a net positive for much of his career.

Hudson has been solid all year at linebacker, too, but won’t get the credit he deserves because he’s not going to rack up the 18.5 tackles for loss he had two years ago. Fifth-year senior Jordan Glasgow marveled how he was on the Butkus Award semifinal list when “I’m the third-best linebacker starting on this team,” noting Hudson and redshirt freshman Cam McGrone were better (and that’s a good, humble teammate).

Hudson (and Glasgow) will be missed next year, both as a player and a leader.

NEWS: Michigan has lost one game, a heartbreaker at Penn State, in which the breaks went against them, since getting hammered at Wisconsin in September. U-M has a chance to finish the season 10-2 with wins over all three rivals.

HARBAUGH: “I’ve just seen continued improvement from our team ... tremendous effort. When you get that you can get everything else. I’ve seen continuous development, improvement on the team.

“Everyone wants to talk about ‘since the game at Penn State,’ the second half [of that

one], why is the team better, what’s the biggest thing? The team is just improving, getting better.

“You can’t plant potatoes one day and expect to eat potato salad the next day. It takes some time to develop.”

VIEWS: Indeed it does. At the same time, there was no excuse for some of the lack of effort in the Wisconsin game, and Harbaugh knew it and addressed it. Attitudes were readjusted, they went back to the drawing board on both offense and defense, and they’re now playing like a legitimate top-10 team.

Harbaugh was asked if he felt his team could play with any team in the country. It was bait, and he didn’t take it. The truth is, this team is vying to finish fifth through 10th, not first through fifth. There’s still a gap there, one that will be tough to overcome in just about any year, but this team is great at home.

We wouldn’t predict it, but we also wouldn’t be stunned by a 2-0 finish to the regular season.

NEWS: Indiana is now 7-3 and only a touchdown underdog against Michigan in Bloomington this weekend.

HARBAUGH: “They’re really good up front. I’ve always thought Peyton Ramsey was a terrific quarterback. He played against us as a true freshman and played really well, has played a lot of good football. He’s a very experienced quarterback now.

“They do a good job. They can get on the edge and they can throw; they can power football, as well. They have a strong, athletic front and their backs are really impressive looking and running.”

VIEWS: They’re as challenging as any offense in the Big Ten with their multiple formations, Harbaugh said, and while they don’t have Ohio State’s talent, they’ve provided the blueprint at times on how to attack the Michigan defense. This could be a tough one.

If U-M controls this one, however, it could be a sign that they’re ready for the biggest test of the year with OSU the following week. Again, that’s a whole different level of competition, but it’s always nice to go into the last game with momentum.

Wolverine Watch: One Down, Much More To Go

John Borton • TheWolverine

Michigan Wolverines football head coach Jim Harbaugh loves to say “Onward,” and that’s precisely where his team needs to go in the fateful two weekends ahead.

Michigan fans and observers are not so burdened, at least for the moment. They can linger a bit, absorb, enjoy. Saturday will arrive soon enough.

Their favorite football team has slain one big, nasty dragon, even if it qualified as a half-dead one in the most recent encounter. Fully absorbing what that means can be accomplished while savoring the achievement.

Tom Crawford does just that. The Michigan grad, East Lansing resident and media personality continuously fights the good fight among Spartans, who enjoyed a decade of all too often rubbing Michigan’s football face in the dirt.

“I wear my Michigan hoodie, and people don’t give you grief ... Yeah, it’s great,” he said. “It’s great to be a Michigan Wolverine here in greater Lansing, and East Lansing, specifically.”

That’s no small luxury. As recently as a half-dozen years ago, Michigan State owned this series. The Spartans didn’t just beat Michigan with regularity, they beat the Wolverines down. They laughed about it.

Jim Harbaugh has checked the box in righting the MSU series, but the big-picture job is far from over.

After four decades of domination by Michigan, the tide turned, and Mark Dantonio’s Spartans were letting everybody know it. They unleashed everything they had, led by a marauding defense that played to the whistle — and several head twists, gouges and quarterback muggings beyond.

The Wolverines appeared helpless to respond. They took their beatings, hoping to push back, and then losing 29-6 or 35-11. They literally drove a stake into Michigan State’s turf. They lost that game, too.

They apologized for the stake.

Now Michigan is having its stake and making MSU eat it, too.

In the five years prior to Jim Harbaugh’s arrival, Michigan State outscored Michigan on average, 27.2-12.0. In the five years Harbaugh has been on hand, the Wolverines flipped that edge, winning on average 26.0-16.2.

That culminated in Michigan’s 44-10 win on Saturday, the biggest victory margin in the series since 2002, a 49-3 U-M victory.

Paul Bunyan is staying in Ann Arbor this winter, and perhaps more often than not in years to come.

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According to a couple of close observers, the Spartans seemed to know what was in store.

“I think Spartan fans, and Spartan fan media, saw this thing coming,” Crawford said. “They were bracing themselves, just in dialogue last week ... This could be ugly. And it was indeed from their standpoint, and it was a beautiful thing for Michigan fans.”

Doug Karsch, sideline reporter for the Michigan radio team, made a pointed observation from field level.

“I was a little surprised, because I’m so accustomed to Dantonio teams showing up for this game, and they didn’t at all. As that game went on, you could almost feel the quit,” Karsch said.

“I’m not around them on a week-in, week-out basis. I can’t say that with the degree of certainty I could with a team I’m really familiar with. But it felt like the kind of game where Michigan State just wanted to get it over with.”

The Wolverines wanted to get Michigan State’s bully stretch over with. They have. If not for one of the luckiest plays in the history of college football — The Immaculate Misdirection in 2015 — and U-M losing its starting quarterback in 2017, Harbaugh would be 5-0 versus Dantonio and the Spartans.

As it is, Harbaugh made a point of setting the record straight — quite literally.

“This has definitely shifted, and I think Jim Harbaugh has embraced that,” Crawford said. “In his postgame presser, one of his initial remarks was that everyone in that locker room now — from his fifth-year seniors down to his freshmen — everybody has a winning record against Michigan State.”

Given the recruiting, roster makeup and general direction of both programs at this point, that’s not changing any time soon.

In the four years prior to Harbaugh showing up, Michigan scored a combined 43 points against Michigan State. This year alone, the Wolverines put 44 on the board.

It’s extremely important how Michigan finishes this football season. Indiana can be dangerous, especially at home. Harbaugh hasn’t gotten out of Memorial Stadium without overtime in his tenure in Ann Arbor.

A win there — a convincing win, with a better defensive effort than U-M exhibited at home a year ago against the Hoosiers — could be crucial to setting up a showdown against the far greater dragon. Last year, cracks in the wall against Indiana foreshadowed the crumbling in Columbus.

Ohio State remains the big target, just like it was precisely 50 years ago. Getting back at least on even footing with the Buckeyes holds the key to Harbaugh’s distinction between good and great.

He’s checked the box against Michigan State. The next one will be a tougher nut to crack.

By The Numbers: U-M’s 34-Point Win Was Its Sixth Largest Vs. MSU Since WWII

Austin Fox • The Wolverine

Saturday’s 44-10 beatdown of MSU was the 112th all-time meeting between the Michigan Wolverines’ football program and the Michigan State Spartans, with the first one occurring all the way back in 1898 when the Green and White were still known as Michigan Agricultural College.

This past weekend’s victory marked the 19th time the Maize and Blue had ever beaten the Spartans by at least 30 points, but just the ninth time since World War II came to an end on Sept. 2, 1945.

It also stood as Michigan’s sixth-largest margin of victory against the Spartans since 1945, and the second biggest since 1986.

The only bigger triumph since ‘86 was the 49-3 obliteration at The Big House in 2002, which at the time started a string of six straight wins against MSU under head coach Lloyd Carr (1995-07) that ran through 2007.

Senior quarterback Shea Patterson set some records of his own in last weekend’s annihilation of the Spartans, with his 384 passing yards standing as the most that any Michigan signal-caller had ever compiled against Michigan State. Current New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady held the previous record, throwing for 285 yards during a 34-31 loss at MSU in 1999.

Patterson’s 384 yards also marked the fifth most in a game in program history, with the contest standing as just the 23rd time a Michigan quarterback had ever thrown four touchdown passes in the Wolverines’ 140 seasons of football.

The 34-point margin of victory was the Maize and Blue’s 15th largest ever in the rivalry, though nine of those 15 occurred prior to 1927.

Each of the 19 times Michigan has defeated MSU by 30 or More Points			
Year	Final Score	Margin of Victory	Host
2019	W, 44-10	34	Michigan
2002	W, 49-3	46	Michigan
1985	W, 31-0	31	MSU
1983	W, 42-0	42	MSU
1976	W, 42-10	32	Michigan
1973	W, 31-0	31	MSU
1947	W, 55-0	55	Michigan
1946	W, 55-7	48	Michigan
1945	W, 40-0	40	Michigan
1926	W, 55-3	52	Michigan
1925	W, 39-0	39	Michigan
1923	W, 37-0	37	Michigan
1922	W, 63-0	63	Michigan
1921	W, 30-0	30	Michigan
1920	W, 35-0	35	Michigan
1912	W, 55-7	48	Michigan
1907	W, 46-0	46	Michigan
1902	W, 119-0	119	Michigan
1898	W, 39-2	37	Michigan

Michigan's six largest margins of victory all time against MSU (48 points or more) all occurred before 1948, with Fielding Yost's 119-0 shellacking of the Spartans in 1902 topping the list. Yost owns eight of Michigan's 14 biggest defeats of Michigan State, coaching the Wolverines from 1901-23, and then again from 25-26.

Bo Schembechler (1969-89), meanwhile, took down the Spartans by at least 30 points four separate times, though it has only occurred twice since he retired following the 1989 campaign.

Gary Moeller (1990-94) never accomplished the feat, and Carr only did so once (49-3 in 2002) despite posting an overall record of 10-3 against the Green and White.

Saturday was the first time with Harbaugh at the helm, and he became just the sixth coach in school history to beat MSU by at least 30 points, joining a list that includes Carr, Schembechler, Fritz Crisler (1938-47), Yost and Gustave Ferbert (1897-99).

BY THE NUMBERS: MICHIGAN AT INDIANA

1st And only regular-season game of the year with a 3:30 p.m. start time for Michigan. Eight contests started (or will start, in the case of the Ohio State showdown) at noon ET and three began at 7:30.

2 Turnovers in U-M's last four games, including two turnover-free outings in wins over Notre Dame and Maryland. The Wolverines gave the ball away nine times through their first three affairs, and 13 times in their first six.

5:26 PM Is when the sun is scheduled to set on Saturday in Bloomington, meaning the entire second half of the game will be played in darkness. Forecasts are also calling for a 60 percent chance of a rain/snow mix, to go along with highs of 38 degrees and maximum wind gusts of eight miles-per-hour.

8.7 Has been the average margin of victory for Michigan in its last four meetings with Indiana, with none coming by more than 11. The two meetings in Bloomington (2015 and 2017) under Harbaugh have each gone into overtime, with U-M pulling out a 48-41 double-overtime triumph in 2015, and a 27-20 win in 2017.

11-Point margin of victory last season for the Wolverines on Senior Day over the Hoosiers (31-20), marking Michigan's closest home game of its undefeated 7-0 campaign in Ann Arbor. Heading into the 2018 home finale with IU, U-M had won its previous six home contests by at least 21 points, and doing so against the Hoosiers would have marked the first time the Maize and Blue had come out on top in all of their home clashes in a season by such a margin since 1901.

16 Touchdown passes for Patterson on the year, which are tied with Illinois redshirt junior quarterback Brandon Peters for the fourth most in the Big Ten. If the senior throws six more scores and 443 more yards this year, he'll become the first U-M signal-caller in school history to put together two separate seasons of 22 touchdown and 2,600 passing yards (those were Patterson's exact stats last year).

369 Receiving yards for wide receiver Jeremy Gallon in Michigan's 63-47 win over Indiana in 2013, which stands as the school's all-time record. Gallon not only set the mark that afternoon, but shattered it by 123 yards (Roy Roundtree's 246 yards against Illinois in 2010 had been the previous record). Quarterback Devin Gardner threw for 503 yards (most in a game in program history) against the Hoosiers that afternoon en route to 751 total yards from the Wolverine offense.

1928 Was the last time U-M played MSU as late in a season as it did last Saturday (Nov. 16). The 1928 matchup between the two rivals occurred on Nov. 17 and resulted in a 3-0 Wolverine victory.

Updates On Every Former Michigan Wolverine In The NFL: Week 11

Ryan Tice • TheWolverine

Due in part to injuries, it's been a quiet few weeks recently for former Michigan football players in the NFL. Even Tom Brady looked like human on Sunday, though he still led his team to victory and the Patriots remain tied for the best record in the league.

There has been one notable exception during that stretch — Kansas City Chiefs defensive end Frank Clark.

Since he returned from missing two games with a neck injury and telling The Kansas City Stars' Sam McDowell that he's been dealing with a pinched nerve since training camp, Clark has posted two sacks in the last two weeks.

He returned to the starting lineup on Monday Night Football — he had come off the bench the week prior — and was a terror off the edge, racking up five quarterback pressures, including one that led directly to an interception, a forced fumble, a pass broken up and five total tackles, in addition to his quarterback takedown.

The Kansas City Star named him their Player of the Game for the performance.

“Defensive end Frank Clark came up with three big defensive plays that showed off his pass-rushing skills,” the newspaper wrote. “He jarred the ball loose from Philip Rivers, and Derrick Nnadi was there to make the interception. Later, Clark forced a fumble on third down that led to a Chargers punt.

“With about six and a half minutes remaining, Clark stuffed Austin Ekeler on third down, forcing another punt. A week ago, Clark said he's been playing this season with a pinched nerve in his neck. If he's close to 100 percent, he can be the difference-making defensive end the Chiefs envisioned when he was signed to a \$105 million contract.”

A full roundup of what former players in the NFL did this past week is below:

OG Ben Braden, New York Jets

After he was released by the Green Bay Packers Nov. 7, he returned to the practice squad of the 3-7 Jets, where he has spent much of the past two seasons before being cut in September.

QB Tom Brady, New England Patriots

Completed 26 of 47 passes (55.3 percent) for 216 yards in the 9-1 Patriots' 17-10 win over the Eagles ... The Patriots are tied for the best record in the league ... He has started all 10 games and completed 256 of 402 passes (63.7 percent) for 2,752 yards with 14 touchdowns and five interceptions ... He has a passer rating of 90.1 and has also rushed for three scores ... He ranks sixth in the league in passing yards and is tied for fourth in passes of 20 or more yards (40).

TE Ian Bunting, Indianapolis Colts

After being released by the Jets, he was signed to the 6-4 Colts' practice squad, where he still resides.

LB Devin Bush Jr., Pittsburgh Steelers

Started and recorded five tackles in the 5-5 Steelers' 21-7 loss to the Browns ... On the year, he has started nine times, played in every game, and logged 74 tackles (46 solo) with one sack, four passes broken up, two interceptions and four fumble recoveries, one of which he returned for a score ... Is tied for 25th in the league for tackles and is first in fumble recoveries ... Only five players have made more tackles and boast more than his six passes defended ... He leads all rookies in tackles by 10 and fumble recoveries by three, and is one of just two first-year players with two picks.

TE Jake Butt, Denver Broncos

On injured reserve with the 3-7 Broncos after a setback in his quest to return from a torn ACL early in the year.

DE Taco Charlton, Miami Dolphins

Missed the 2-8 Dolphins' 37-20 loss to the Bills with an elbow injury ... Has started five times and appeared in seven games with Miami ... Has notched 18 tackles with one forced fumble and a career-high 4.0 sacks.

WR Jehu Chesson, Washington Redskins

Is on injured reserve for 1-9 Washington.

DE Frank Clark, Kansas City Chiefs

Had a big game on Monday Night Football in the 7-4 Chiefs' 24-17 win over the Chargers ... He finished with five tackles, one sack, an additional tackle for loss, a forced fumble, three quarterback hits and one pass broken up ... One of his quarterback hits led to an interception as well ... Has started eight times and appeared in nine games while logging 26 tackles, 5.0 sacks, one interception, three forced fumbles, three passes broken up and a fumble recovery ... Is tied for seventh in the league in forced fumbles.

OL Mason Cole, Arizona Cardinals

After starting two straight games at two different positions (left guard and right tackle), went back to being a reserve in the 3-7-1 Cardinals' 36-26 loss to the 49ers ... He played mostly on special teams, but did line up at guard for three snaps ... Has appeared in all 11 games this year with two starts.

CB Blake Countess, New York Jets

Played on two special teams snaps in the 3-7 Jets' 34-17 win over Washington ... Has appeared in four games this year, but has not recorded any statistics.

WR Amara Darboh, Pittsburgh Steelers

Was signed to the 5-5 Steelers' practice squad Monday.

WR Devin Funchess, Indianapolis Colts

Started for the 6-4 Colts and broke his collarbone in week one, after hauling in three passes for 32 yards, and is now on injured reserve ... He is reportedly nearing a return to practice, and the team is down its top three wideouts, so he's likely to be activated from IR when healthy (he became eligible to return Sunday).

LB Rashaan Gary, Green Bay Packers

The 8-2 Packers were off this week ... Has seen action in every game off the bench and logged 12 tackles with one sack and one fumble recovery.

LB Ben Gedeon, Minnesota Vikings

Started but did not post any statistics in the 8-3 Vikings' 27-23 win over the Broncos ... Was only in for six defensive snaps and five special teams plays ... Has made 13 stops while starting five times and appearing in eight games.

TE Zach Gentry, Pittsburgh Steelers

Was inactive in the 5-5 Steelers' 21-7 loss to the Browns ... Has appeared in three games, but has not recorded any statistics outside of a fumble recovery.

OL Graham Glasgow, Detroit Lions

Started at right guard and played 95 percent of his team's offensive snaps in the 3-6-1 Lions' 35-27 loss to the Cowboys ... Has started in all nine appearances he's made this year.

DT Ryan Glasgow, Cincinnati Bengals

Is on injured reserve, but had appeared in five games with two starts for 0-10 Cincinnati and totaled seven tackles.

DE Brandon Graham, Philadelphia Eagles

Notched a pair of stops and a QB hit in the 5-5 Eagles' 17-10 loss to the Patriots ... Has started each outing for Philadelphia and racked up 35 tackles (25 solo) with 6.0 sacks, one forced fumble and two fumble recoveries ... Is tied for 26th in the league in sacks.

QB Chad Henne, Kansas City Chiefs

Activated from injured reserve two weeks ago, but was inactive in the 7-4 Chiefs' 24-17 win over the Chargers.

RB Karan Higdon, Houston Texans

Is on the 6-4 Texans' practice squad.

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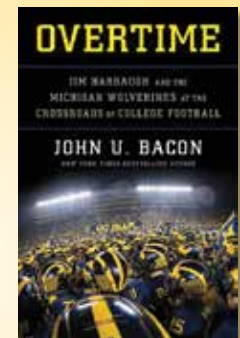
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S Lano Hill, Seattle Seahawks

The 8-2 Seahawks had a bye ... Prior to that, he was inactive for four straight weeks due to an elbow injury ... Has played in six of 10 games with two starts and made eight tackles (five solo).

DT Maurice Hurst, Oakland Raiders

Tallied a tackle and recovered a fumble in the 6-4 Raiders' 17-10 win over the Bengals ... Has started twice and appeared in all 10 games while making 13 tackles with 2.5 sacks, one pass broken up and a fumble recovery.

OL Kyle Kalis, Oakland Raiders

Was picked up for the 6-4 Raiders' practice squad in late October.

FB Joe Kerridge, Cleveland Browns

On injured reserve with the 4-6 Browns.

OT Taylor Lewan, Tennessee Titans

The 5-5 Titans were off this week ... Has started all six games since returning from a four-game suspension and has only missed two snaps.

CB Jourdan Lewis, Dallas Cowboys

Played 48 percent of his team's defensive snaps and also on special teams in the 6-4 Cowboys' 35-27 win over the Lions ... On the year, he has recorded 21 tackles (16 solo), one sack, an interception that he returned 20 yards and a fumble recovery that he ran back 63 yards for a touchdown in 10 games (one start).

CB David Long, Los Angeles Rams

Was in for 15 defensive snaps and 19 plays on special teams in the 6-4 Rams' 17-7 win over the Bears ... Notched two stops ... Has four tackles in four games played on the year.

OL Erik Magnuson, Oakland Raiders

Was not active in the 6-4 Raiders' 17-10 win over the Bengals ... Has appeared in one game since being signed off the Bills practice squad.

DT Bryan Mone, Seattle Seahawks

Is on the 8-2 Seahawks' practice squad once again ... Has appeared in three games and made three tackles.

OL Patrick Omameh, New Orleans Saints

Played as a reserve (one offensive snap and six on special teams) in the 8-2 Saints' 34-

17 win over the Buccaneers ... Has appeared in eight contests this year.

S Jabrill Peppers, New York Giants

The 2-8 Giants were off this week ... On the year, he has started every game and posted 71 tackles (47 solo) and five passes broken up with one interception (a pick-six) and three forced fumbles ... Is tied for 34th in the league in tackles; only nine players have at least 70 tackles and six passes defended ... His three forced fumbles are tied for seventh in the league.

QB Jake Rudock, Miami Dolphins

Is on the 2-8 Dolphins' practice squad.

LB Jake Ryan, Jacksonville Jaguars

On the reserve/non-football injury list for the 4-6 Jaguars after suffering an offseason setback during his rehab from a torn ACL.

OL Michael Schofield, Los Angeles Chargers

Started at right guard and played every offensive snap in the 4-7 Chargers' 24-17 loss to the Chiefs ... Has not missed a snap yet this year while starting all 11 contests.

CB Brandon Watson, Jacksonville Jaguars

Made his NFL debut last week and recorded this first NFL tackle in the 4-6 Jaguars' 33-13 loss to the Colts while playing on special teams.

S Jarrod Wilson, Jacksonville Jaguars

Notched six tackles and snared his first NFL interception in the 4-6 Jaguars' 33-13 loss to the Colts ... Has started each game this year and played every snap ... One of just three players who had been on the field for every snap from scrimmage this season for his team ... On the year, he's posted 48 tackles (36 solo) with one interception, two passes broken up and a forced fumble.

DE Chase Winovich, New England Patriots

Played 30 defensive snaps and on special teams in the 9-1 Patriots' 17-10 win over the Eagles; notched a trio of solo tackles and two QB hits ... On the year, he has logged 14 tackles (10 solo) with 4.5 sacks, plus a touchdown after a blocked punt ... Is tied for fourth in the league among rookies in sacks.

DE Chris Wormley, Baltimore Ravens

Came off the bench to play 16 defensive snaps (26 percent of the unit's time on the field) and on special teams, posting a pair of stops, in the 8-2 Ravens' 41-7 win over the Texans ... Both tackles came after one-yard gains ... Has seen action in all 10 contests so far and made four starts with 13 tackles, one sack and one pass broken up.

Notebook: IU Head Coach Tom Allen Previews Michigan, Gives Injury Update

Clayton Sayfie • TheWolverine

The Indiana Hoosiers (7-3 overall, 4-3 Big Ten) are coming off a close 34-27 loss to Penn State in Happy Valley last week. They play another top-15 team in the Michigan Wolverines (8-2 overall, 5-2 Big Ten) this Saturday.

Hoosiers head coach Tom Allen met with the media to preview the matchup with the Wolverines. He also gave an update on an injury that occurred against PSU.

Indiana Hoosiers Head Coach Tom Allen Previews Michigan Game

Indiana is 4-1 this season when playing at home, with the lone loss coming Sept. 14 against Ohio State. This Saturday will be the final home game of the season in Bloomington, and Allen is hoping to end it on a high note for his seniors.

“We’ve got a big opportunity for our seniors,” Allen said. “We’re going to recognize 16 seniors on Saturday. It’s a special group of guys, really special to me because of the change they’ve created here.”

Allen’s group will face the challenge of playing a surging U-M team that has won its last three games, all in blowout fashion.

“I have a lot of respect for them and their coaches, the talent that they have, and how they’ve recruited,” Allen said while complimenting U-M. “They are who they are historically.

“They’re playing their best football. They’re a really impressive football team, physically and athletically, and just doing great things in all three phases. They’ve got talented specialists, and an excellent quarterback and stable of running backs. It’s a really impressive receiver corps, and big, physical and athletic offensive line. There are some new faces on defense, but they’re really explosive and [defensive coordinator] Don Brown does a phenomenal job schematically, and they play really hard. Coach [Jim] Harbaugh’s got them playing really, really well.

“They had a big game last week in an important game for them, and they played really, really good football in all three phases. We’ve got a great chance to finish out a home slate for this season. That’s important to us. It’s about how you finish, and that’s a big emphasis for our guys.”

The Hoosiers have struggled to contain running quarterbacks at times this season, including last week against Nittany Lions signal-caller Sean Clifford. Clifford ran it 10 times for 55 yards and 2 touchdowns in the game.

U-M senior quarterback Shea Patterson will pose a similar challenge, and he has shown the ability to keep the ball on read-options, in addition to being able to get out of the pocket.

“Shea Patterson is a really good athlete,” Allen said. “He can run it as good as anybody we’ve played the whole year. They have a ton of talented receivers to defend — that’s

where the stress comes.”

Like many people, Allen has noticed a difference between U-M’s play early in the season to now.

“Going back [to the beginning of the year], they look like a completely different team, especially on offense,” Allen noted. “I think part of it is a new system. They did make changes; it. I think that takes a little time.

“You go through your season and figure out what you really do well within that new system and you try to maximize those [strengths]. Then guys get more confident and start to execute, just like you see with our team.

“I just think they’re playing with a high level of confidence, and they’re executing their scheme better — guys are getting open, they’re getting the ball to receivers and protecting the ball. They had issues with that early on, and they haven’t really had issues with that lately. That’s a big deal, when you start turning the ball over, then a lot of bad things happen.

“You just see a comfort level with what they’re doing and the system that they’ve installed. They’ve got a lot of good athletes, a lot of really good players, so it’s starting to look a lot different. That creates a lot of challenges for us.”

Allen Talks Injury To Junior Wide Receiver Whop Philyor

Hoosiers’ junior wide receiver Whop Philyor left the PSU game with an apparent concussion and will be questionable for this weekend’s contest. Philyor is on the watch list for the Biletnikoff Award, given to the nation’s most outstanding receiver, and he has 61 receptions for 863 yards and 3 touchdowns on the season.

“I do not know yet,” Allen said, after being asked if Philyor will be able to play Saturday. “That’s a process that we’ll go through throughout the week, and we’ll do a great job of being very diligent with that in his best interest.”

Additional Indiana Hoosiers Football Notes

- The Hoosiers will be without redshirt freshman quarterback Michael Penix Jr.

Penix completed 110 of his 160 passing attempts on the season for 1,394 yards, 10 touchdowns and four interceptions. He also had 22 rush attempts for 119 yards and two touchdowns, but suffered a season-ending injury in the Nov. 2 game against Northwestern.

- With Penix Jr. out, redshirt junior Peyton Ramsey will start under center for the Hoosiers. Ramsey has been productive, completing 72.7 percent of his passes on the season. He is 144 of 198 for 1,673 yards, 10 touchdowns and three interceptions.

Ramsey has experience playing against the Wolverines’ defense. In the 2018 game between the two teams, he completed 16 of his 35 attempts for 195 yards, one touchdown and an interception.

In 2017 against U-M, Ramsey completed 20 of his 41 attempts for 178 yards, one score and two picks.

Bell Gives Credit For His Career Day To Blocking Efforts Of U-M's WRs

Austin Fox • TheWolverine

Michigan Wolverines football sophomore wide receiver Ronnie Bell had the best game of his U-M career on Saturday, hauling in nine catches for 150 yards in the Maize and Blue's 44-10 beatdown of MSU.

Bell's 37 receptions and 621 yards both lead the team this year, but despite that fact, the sophomore has yet to find the end zone.

"Absolutely," he exclaimed Tuesday night when asked if his touchdown-less drought is motivation to get in. "C.J. [freshman receiver Cornelius Johnson, who found the end zone for the first time over the weekend] hit me today with, 'Who's got more touchdowns?'"

"We're always messing around and he got me on the chin a little bit."

Offensive coordinator Josh Gattis brought the 'speed in space' mantra with him when he was hired in the offseason, but that slogan was nowhere to be found on the field throughout the first month and a half (or so) of Michigan's season.

It came out in full force against the Spartans, however, with the Wolverines constantly getting the ball to Bell in space and allowing him to produce after the catch, en route to 87 yards after the catch (YAC).

"The outside blocking was amazing," he explained, deflecting the credit elsewhere. "When you have the ball in your hands, your job is easy when everyone in front of you is on the ground."

Head coach Jim Harbaugh praised his wide receivers' blocking efforts on Monday, admitting it wasn't where it needed to be earlier in the year.

The wideouts turned in their best performance of the season in that department against MSU, however, and it helped lead to the 384-yard showing for senior quarterback Shea Patterson.

"My dad told me when I was younger that I wouldn't play if I wasn't willing to block, so blocking has always been something I take personal," Bell revealed. "We've all done a good job of making it personal, and all the receivers have blocked their tails off."

Bell came to Michigan as a two-star recruit who had originally signed to play collegiate basketball at Missouri State, but he has clearly made the transition to being full time on the gridiron smoothly.

"Basketball is a lot of up and down, up and down," he noted when asked if his basketball background has helped him on the football field at all. "Once I got athletic and started dunking, my dad would tell that I didn't care for my body when I'm in the air. So when the football is in the air, there's no hesitation for what's around you — you just have to catch it."

"Crossing someone over in basketball and making a cut in football are kind of the same thing, except you don't have to dribble it."

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Other Notes From Ronnie Bell's Time With The Media

- The lowlight of Bell's season occurred late in the Oct. 19 loss at Penn State, when the sophomore dropped a potential game-tying catch in the end zone that likely would have sent the contest into overtime.

ABC's cameras then spotted the sophomore crying on the sideline, and the sequence gained plenty of national attention as a result.

"I was sick," he recalled. "I just remember feeling like I had let everybody was down. I was mad at myself and it was a sick feeling. Everybody was [encouraging me after it]. There wasn't anybody who wasn't there for me, and they were all there to pick me up."

"It was hard to be down on myself by the time we got back [to Ann Arbor], because everyone was picking me up."