College Football Predictions 2008 Michigan State Spartans

Contributed by Jimmy Boyd
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The Michigan State Spartans seem to always get off to a 4-0 or 5-0 start to have us thinking that they just might be able to challenge the big boys of the Big Ten. But then they usually fade down the stretch. Online Sportsbook BetUS.com has the Michigan State Spartans +7500 odds to win the 2009 BCS Championship. Are the Spartans of playing a full season in their 2008-09 campaign? Find out in Expert Football Handicapper Jimmy Boyd's 2008 Michigan State Spartans College Football Predictions and Season Preview for Point-Spreads.com.

Offense - Michigan State found success by running the football last season. Javon Ringer put together one of the best seasons in Spartan history by rushing for 1,447 yards while splitting carries with Jehuu Caulcrick. Caulcrick and his school-record 21 touchdowns are gone so now we'll get a chance to see what Ringer is really made of. Caulcrick was the bruising short yardage guy last season, but now Ringer will get the ball in those situations. Junior A.J. Jimmerson and redshirt frosh Andre Anderson will spell him at times. Ringer won't be able to do it alone. QB Brian Hoyer is going to have to keep the defense honest. Hoyer played well in back-to-back regular season ending wins over Purdue and Penn State to bring the Spartans to their first bowl game in four years. But he looked terrible in that bowl game, committing five turnovers. I have no doubt that Hoyer will be better, but his supporting cast won't be as star receiver Devin Thomas and star tight end Kellen Davis are off to the NFL. The line is solid, and that is one plus.

Defense - The Spartans implemented a more aggressive attack-style defense in 2007 and the result was 40 sacks and 20 forced turnovers. With better talent on the roster in 2008, Michigan State could put up even better numbers this year. Brandon Long should be a terror as an edge rusher and Trevor Anderson should be able to step right in and play after being a two-year starter at Cincinnati. Talented sophomores Oren Wilson and Antonio Jeremiah will join returning starter Justin Kershaw up front in the interior line. Michigan State's best defensive player, Greg Jones, will move to middle linebacker after spending last year on the outside. Jones led MSU with 78 tackles as a true freshman. A very experienced secondary should be solid also.

Special Teams - Devin Thomas will be extremely missed after setting MSU's single season mark for kickoff return yards. Mark Dell could be his replacement. He can be a dangerous punt and kick returner, but he can't do it all and play receiver so Johnny Adams and Otis Wiley should see some time also. Brett Swenson will be in his third season as place kicker. Swenson was a respectable 15 of 22 last season. The punting game must get better. Sophomore punter Aaron Bates needs to improve on his 39.7 yards per punt average.

College Football Predictions on the 2008 Michigan State Spartans – 6th in Big Ten

Don't look now, but the Spartans could be this year's Illinois if they can catch a few breaks. They'll boast one of the best running attacks in the league and a defense capable of causing plenty of havoc. They won't be a tough out in any game. I see them sandwhiched between Michigan and Iowa though.

BetUS.com has posted college football predictions betting odds to win the 2009 BCS Championship:

LSU +1200

Southern Cal +300

California +4500

Ohio State +1000

Wisconsin +3000

Boston College +12500

Florida +600

Kentucky +10000

South Florida +5000

Oklahoma +900

Georgia +900

West Virginia +1600

Oregon +4500

Virginia Tech +1400

Texas +1200

Missouri +1400

South Carolina +4500

Arizona State +4000

Rutgers +8000

Clemson +2000

Nebraska +7500

Cincinnati +8000

UCLA +6000

Miami Florida +6000

Florida State +5000

Michigan State +7500

Kansas +3000

Kansas State +10000

Alabama +5000

Auburn +2000

Louisville +8000

Notre Dame +6500

Oklahoma State +12000

Penn State +5000

Tennessee +3000

Texas A&M +10000

Texas Tech +5000

Wake Forest +10000

Washington +10000

Iowa +10000

Illinois +3300

Georgia Tech +10000

Pittsburgh +8000