

Penn State Nittany Lions 2009 College Football Picks

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Wednesday, 02 September 2009

Penn State Nittany Lions 2009 College Football Picks: Joe Paterno's squad isn't as experienced and talented as a year ago, but there is still enough explosive talent on both sides of the ball to make Penn State a contender in the Big 10. The college football picks experts at online sportsbook SBG Global has the Penn State Nittany Lions listed at +1500 odds to win the 2010 BCS National Championship Title.

#8 Penn State University
2008 Season Record: 11-2
Big 10 Champions
2008 Final Rank: 8
Returning Starters on Offense: 5
Returning Starters on Defense: 4

Pros: Led by senior quarterback Daryll Clark (2,592 passing yards, 10 touchdowns, 6 interceptions) and junior running back Evan Royster (1,236 yards rushing, 12 touchdowns), the offense should be just as prolific in 2009 as they were last year when they averaged 38.9 points per contest. The strength of the defense will be the front seven, where they return both starting tackles and three veteran linebackers. Senior Sean Lee, a two-year starter before missing the 2008 season with a knee injury, returns to add depth to a solid unit.

Cons: Just how deep the linebacker corps will be is dependent on the status of All-Big 10 pick Navorro Bowman, who violated terms of his probation in April and will likely face some team discipline. The top three receivers from a year ago are gone, but Brett Brackett (13 catches, 160 yards) and Graham Zug (11 catches, 174 yards) have experience and should help fill the void. The offensive line will also be revamped as the graduation of three All-Conference starters necessitates a shuffling of the unit. The defensive secondary will be the least experienced unit on the team, as the entire projected starting lineup has only nine career starts.

Surprise Stat: Penn State converted 52% of their third down attempts while holding opponents to only a 32% success rate.

The college football picks odds makers at SBG Global have the Penn State Nittany Lions +130 odds favorites to win the Big 10 Conference Title.

Overall Outlook: There is enough talent on both sides of the ball for Penn State to win most of their games. However, if they hope to repeat as Big 10 champions, the new starters on the offensive line and in the defensive secondary must produce. Freshman quarterback Kevin Newsome has already moved into the two-deep chart as the backup to Darryll Clark. The Nittany Lions also made important additions on the offensive line with Eric Shrive and in the defensive backfield with Darrell Givens and Derrick Thomas.

Big Game: After winning on the road in Columbus last season, Penn State will look to earn back-to-back victories over Ohio State for the first time ever when the Buckeyes travel to Happy Valley on November 7th. It is likely that the winner of this contest will be punching a ticket to Pasadena for the Rose Bowl.

Key to Success: Given that their second team quarterback is a true freshman and the others behind him are walk-ons, the most important and crucial thing for Penn State this season will be to ensure the ongoing health of quarterback Daryll Clark. Running back Stephfon Green is dangerous and he provides a big-play option out of the backfield as he had the longest run (69 yards) and pass reception (80 yards) for the Nittany Lions a year ago.

Online Sportsbook SBG Global has posted the following odds to win the 2010 BCS National Championship:

Alabama +2200
Arizona St +7000
Arkansas +7000
Auburn +9000
Boston College +7500
California +2200
Cincinnati +8500
Clemson +7500
Colorado +8500
Florida +150
Florida St +4000
Georgia +7500

Georgia Tech +1200
Illinois +4500
Iowa +8500
Kansas +4500
Kansas St +8500
Kentucky +8500
Louisville +8500
LSU +3200
Miami FL +3200
Michigan +8500
Michigan St +1700
Missouri +8500
Nebraska +4500
Notre Dame +1200
Ohio St +800
Oklahoma +650
Oklahoma St +2700
Oregon +4500
Penn St +1500
Rutgers +4500
South Carolina +8500
South Florida+5000
Southern Cal +600
TCU +2500
Tennessee +8500
Texas +650
Texas A&M +8500
Texas Tech +6500
UCLA +8500
Utah +1200
Virginia Tech +1700
Wake Forest +8500
North Carolina +4500
West Virginia +6000
Wisconsin +6500
Field (All Others) +1200