

the game

MSU vs. Wisconsin

Kickoff at noon Saturday

Follow the game

TV: ESPN
Radio: WJR (760-AM)

Forecast

Partly cloudy
High: 55° | Low: 37°
Precipitation: 20 percent

Extra point

Wisconsin and MSU have scored 277 combined points their last four matchups.

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PHOTOS BY JASON CHIOU/THE STATE NEWS

Redshirt freshman quarterback Kirk Cousins calls the play after replacing senior starter Brian Hoyer against Ohio State on Oct. 18 at Spartan Stadium. Cousins, who entered the game with just four career passing attempts, completed his first 10 passes against the Buckeyes.

Kirk Cousins is the backup quarterback, but he prepares like he's the starter. After all, he's only ...

ONE SNAP AWAY

"My mentality is prepare like I'm the starter and if on Saturday morning I can say, 'If I was starting this game, I'd be ready to go,' then I feel that I've done all I needed to do to prepare."

Kirk Cousins,
redshirt freshman
quarterback

By Cash Kruth
THE STATE NEWS

In one snap, Kirk Cousins' role on the MSU football team could change dramatically. One hard hit on senior quarterback Brian Hoyer and the redshirt freshman would have to trade his headset for his helmet and run onto the field to lead the Spartans. Cousins genuinely hopes that day never comes because he would hate to see a player he's looked up to and learned from go down with an injury. But every day, he prepares as though the unthinkable will happen, because if it does, Cousins will go from the backup to the No. 1 quarterback in an instant.

"I prepare like I'm the starter, that's the way I have to look at it," Cousins said. "I have to think that I'm starting on Saturday, so if my number gets called like it did in a couple games this year, I have to be ready."

"My mentality is prepare like I'm the starter and if on Saturday morning I can say, 'If I was starting this game, I'd be ready to go,' then I feel that I've done all I needed to do to prepare."

That scenario has already happened once this year, when Hoyer was knocked out of the Ohio State game with hand and head injuries. Dantonio summoned Cousins, who had thrown just

four passes in his collegiate career, onto the field against the then-No. 12 team in the country.

Despite his inexperience, Cousins looked like a seasoned veteran against the Buckeyes, completing his first 10 passes and finishing the game 18-for-25 passing for 161 yards, a touchdown and an interception.

Hoyer said Cousins' performance against the Buckeyes was a product of his hard work and preparation.

"It really showed when he came in when I got taken out of the Ohio State game," Hoyer

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