

the game

MSU vs. Penn State

Kickoff at 3:30 p.m. Saturday

Follow the game

TV: ABC
Radio: WJR (760-AM)

Forecast

Few snow showers
High: 30° | Low: 19°
Precipitation: 30 percent

Extra point

MSU will play for at least a share of the Big Ten Championship and a possible Rose Bowl birth.

For more ...

Visit stateneews.com for live blogging throughout the game.

IT'S THE FINAL REGULAR-SEASON GAME OF THE YEAR, AND MORE THAN PRIDE IS ON THE LINE.

AS THE SPARTANS TAKE ON PENN STATE SATURDAY, THEY'VE GOT ONE SHOT.

ONE SHOT AT WINNING AT LEAST A SHARE OF THE BIG TEN TITLE, ONE SHOT AT THE FIRST 10-WIN SEASON SINCE 1999. NOT TO MENTION, ONE SHOT AT THE ROSE BOWL.

ONE GAME, ONE GOAL, ONE OPPORTUNITY

ONE SHOT



SAM RUIZ/THE STATE NEWS

"These are the things, to me, that when you're 7 or 10 years old, you're out on the street and you're playing the game for all the marbles."

Mark Dantonio, MSU head coach

By Cash Kruth
THE STATE NEWS

It started out as a vision. Perhaps the idea could be called a pipe dream. But when George Perles, then-MSU's football coach and Athletics Director, emerged from the Spartan Stadium tunnel for MSU's regular season finale against Illinois in 1991 and saw a mere 61,721 fans in the crowd, he decided the MSU football program needed a change.

Perles, now an MSU Trustee, thought fans needed to see the Spartans regularly face another big-time program the final game of the regular season to keep fans interested in the Spartans. He and Penn State's Joe Paterno, who

is now in his 43rd season as head coach of the Nittany Lions, renewed the rivalry between two teams who had not played each other in 26 years.

Although the annual meeting would be between the first two land-grant universities in the country, the idea behind Perles' vision wasn't simply about history. It was about the future.

"We made the Land Grant Trophy with the hope that someday, this game would be bigger than the Michigan, Ohio State game," Perles said of "The Big Game"

See FOOTBALL on page 2B

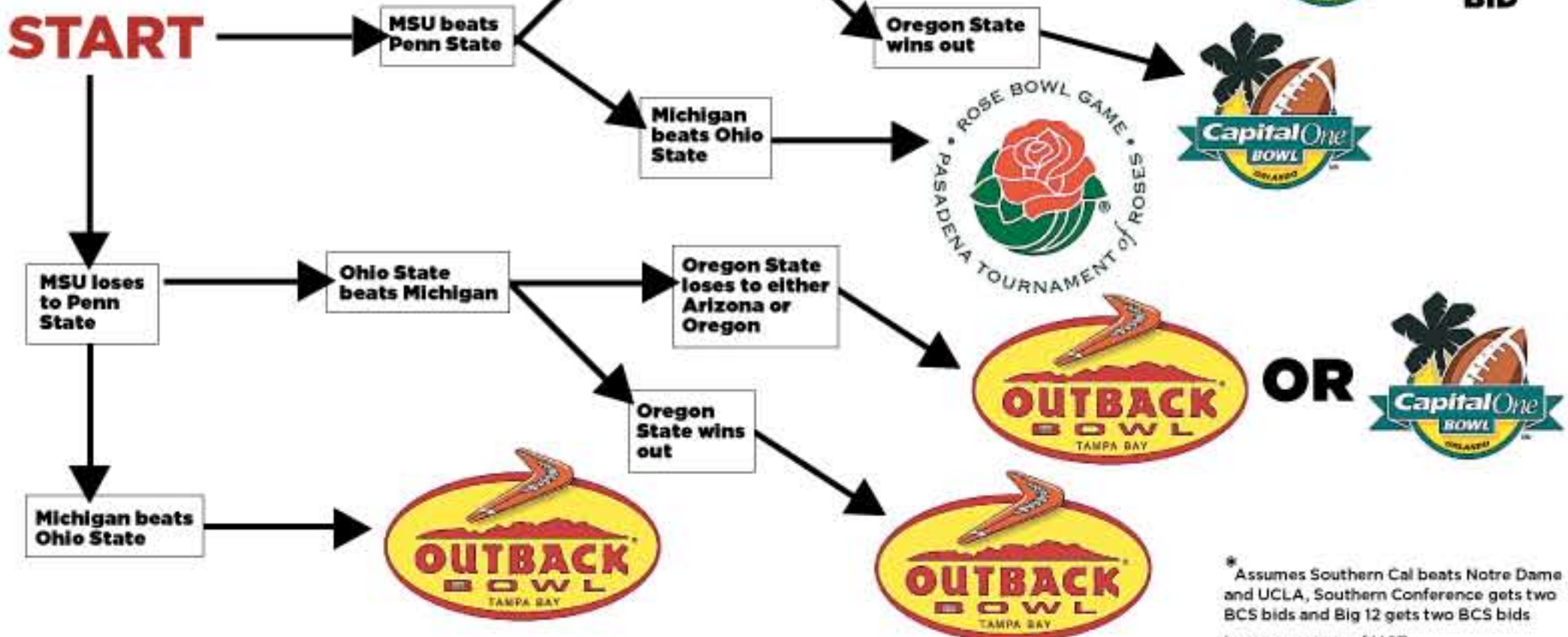
Inside the MSU, Penn State rivalry

Although Penn State leads the series with an 11-4 record against the Spartans since the rivalry was renewed in 1993, there have been many close games between the two during the past 15 years.

In that time, MSU and Penn State have both gone to a bowl in the same year seven times. The first three times, Penn State won by an average of less than three points a game, but in the next four matchups in bowl years the Spartans have come out on top, including a 35-31 win last season at Spartan Stadium.

SOURCES: MSU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS AND THE STATE NEWS

Want to know the likely scenarios for which bowl game MSU is going to end up at? Look no further. Let's go bowling.*



* Assumes Southern Cal beats Notre Dame and UCLA, Southern Conference gets two BCS bids and Big 12 gets two BCS bids
Logos courtesy of MCT