

PENN STATE



FOOTBALL

Imperfect Penn State falls to Iowa

By LUKE MEREDITH
AP SPORTS WRITER

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Penn State can't blame the BCS for this.

The Nittany Lions perfect season and hopes for giving coach Joe Paterno another national title were dashed by Iowa's backup kicker.

Daniel Murray, who hadn't made a field goal since the season opener, hit a 31-yarder with a second left and the Hawkeyes rallied to stun the third-ranked Nittany Lions 24-23.

All that talk about an unbeaten Penn State possibly being left out of the BCS national title game turned out to be premature. A third championship for the 81-year-old Paterno, who's had four unbeaten teams not win titles, is a long shot now.

Shonn Greene rushed for 117 yards and two touchdowns, and Ricky Stanzi bounced back from an interception and a fumble to lead the Hawkeyes (6-4, 3-3 Big Ten) on their game-winning drive, which came after Daryll Clark threw just his third interception of the season.

Murray had lost the regular field-goal duties to freshman

Trent Mossbrucker and was relegated to kickoffs. But with the winds swirling and strong, coach Kirk Ferentz opted for experience and Murray's strong leg.

He drilled it down the middle, sending Iowa's freezing fans spilling onto the field.

"I've always dreamed about it," said Murray, who grew up in Iowa City. "I kept hoping and hoping I'd get my chance."

The Nittany Lions were third behind Alabama and Texas Tech in the last Bowl Championship Series standings, jumped by the Red Raiders after they beat then-No. 1 Texas.

Penn State won't have to worry about being stuck behind the Tide and Raiders anymore. The Big Ten title and a Rose Bowl berth are the Nittany Lions' goals now.

"We need to keep our heads up. We can still have a heck of a year," said Paterno, who again coached from the press box and got around with a cane because of a sore leg and hip.

Iowa was down 23-14 heading into the fourth quarter. But Greene scored his second TD, from 6 yards out, to make it 23-21 with 9:20 left.

On the next possession, Penn State looked as if it got a break, when Iowa was called for a roughing the punter penalty that had the Hawkeyes seething. The Nittany Lions kept the ball and continued its time-consuming march.

But Clark made an errant throw down the middle that was picked off by Tyler Sash, who returned to Iowa's 29 with 3:46 left. Iowa then caught another break when Penn State was flagged for pass interference on third down, getting the Hawkeyes near midfield with a first down.

Stanzi, who was 15-of-25 passing for 171 yards, hit Derrell Johnson-Koulianos at the Penn State 15 with 18 seconds left to set up Murray's kick.

"I want to apologize to the whole Penn State nation for my game play today," Clark said. "I just keep having that turnover recurring in my head over and over. I can't get it out of my mind."

This was the biggest win for Iowa in years, its first against a top-five team since 1990. The Hawkeyes suffered through

Please see IOWA
on page 19

No. 7 Penn State pulls away for win over Indiana

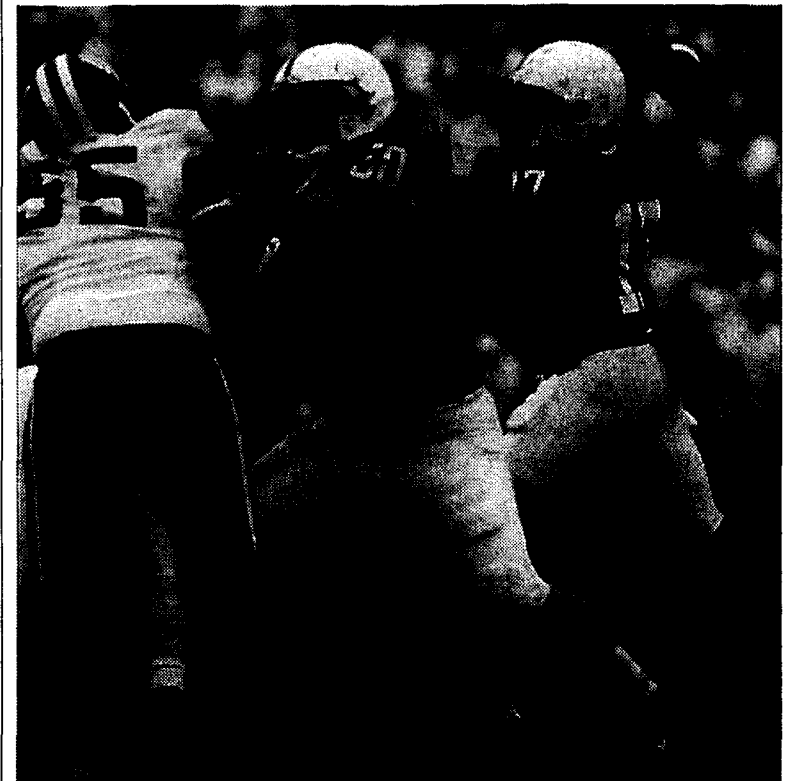


Photo courtesy of MAXWELL KRUGER/ Gopsusports.cstv.com

Daryll Clark throws a pass.

By GENARO C. ARMAS
AP SPORTS WRITER

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP) — A sluggish start on a dreary day clouded up No. 7 Penn State's dreams of the Rose Bowl for a half.

Nothing that Daryll Clark or a stifling defense couldn't shake off, though.

Derrick Williams ran for one score and caught a touchdown pass, Clark threw for 240 yards and two scores in an uneven outing, and the defense held Indiana to six first downs in the Nittany Lions' 34-7 victory Saturday.

Beat No. 15 Michigan State next week at home and the Nittany Lions (10-1, 6-1 Big Ten) can lock up a trip to Pasadena — a nice consolation prize after seeing their hopes for a national title take a serious blow with the loss Nov. 8 at Iowa.

"I told the whole football team ... just go out there and have some fun, relax," coach Joe Paterno said.

As if next week wasn't important enough, the 81-year Paterno revealed after the game that he may need hip replacement surgery after the regular season. JoePa spent the afternoon in the press box again because a sore hip and

right leg make it difficult for him to pace the sideline.

"I wish we could talk about my football team instead of my leg," said Paterno, who notched his 382nd career win.

The six Indiana first downs were the fewest ever allowed by Penn State against a Big Ten opponent. The Hoosiers managed just 180 yards on the afternoon, and could muster just 36 yards and one first down after halftime.

Heavy underdogs coming into Beaver Stadium, Indiana (3-8, 1-6 Big Ten) trailed just 10-7 at halftime in large part because of miscues by Penn State. One drive ended after Clark fumbled at the Indiana 1, while Kevin Kelly missed a 40-yard field goal attempt to foil another effort.

Momentum swung after halftime to the home team.

Tailback Evan Royster bounced off three Indiana tacklers like a pinball on a 19-yard touchdown run to put Penn State up 17-7. Royster finished with 63 yards on 12 carries.

The defense then pinned Indiana deep on the next drive with a three-and-out. Kelly kicked a 36-yard field goal to extend the lead to 13

Please see INDIANA
on page 19

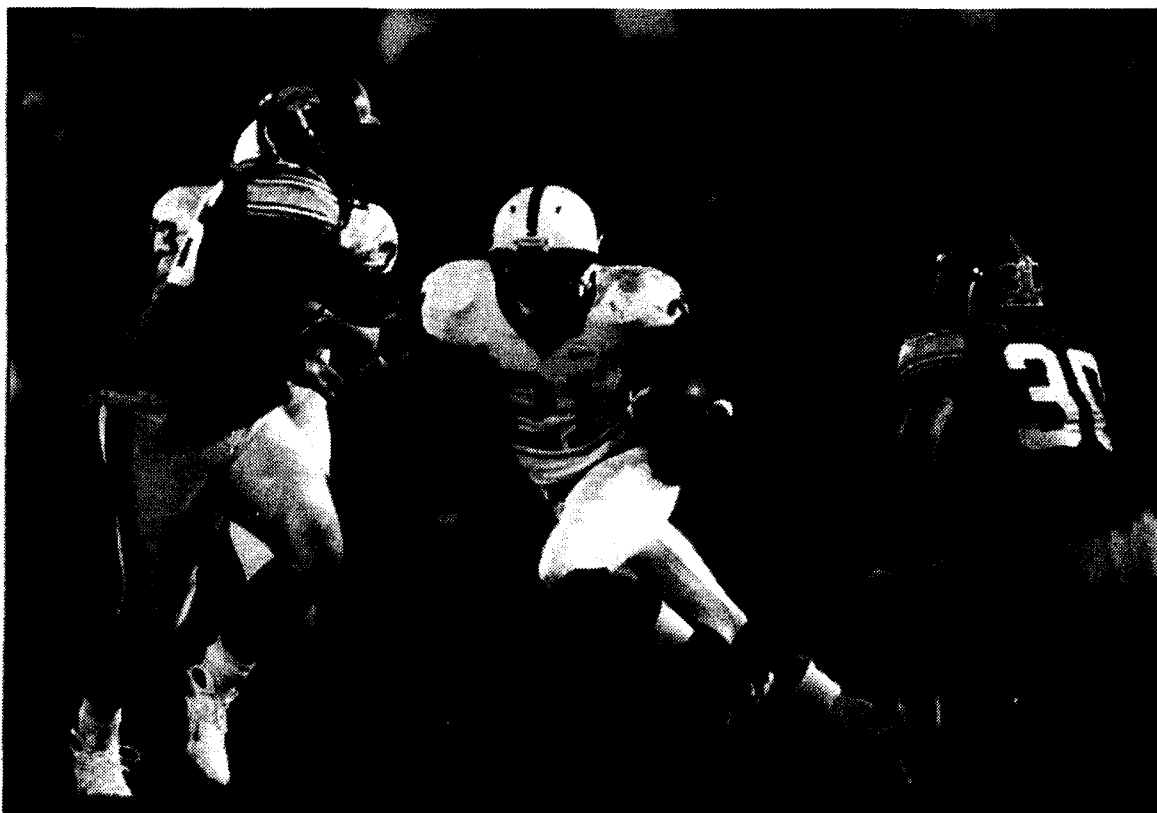


Photo by STEVE MANUEL/ Gopsusports.cstv.com

Stephfon Green (21) looks to find a hole in the Iowa defense.