

Who is on Your Football Team?

The Michigan State Spartans

By: Ryder Thomasson

The Michigan State Football team can play to win on the football field. In their history they have had 6 National Championships and 9 Big Ten Championships. The current coach, Mark Dantonio, broke the record this year and became the winningest coach in Michigan State football history. The football team has over 100 players on the team this year, but other than their skills on the football field, what do you know about them?

The players of the 2019 Michigan State football team come from more 95 different previous schools, more than 85 different U.S. cities, 14 states, and 2 countries. It's no surprise that the most players are from Michigan. 55 players have stayed in their home state to join the Michigan State football team. The next state with the most players is Ohio with 26 players. Illinois is the last double digit state with 12 players. States in the single digits are Georgia with 4 players, California and Texas with 3 players, and Iowa and Wisconsin with 2 players. Then Kentucky, Florida, Indiana, Nevada, Arizona, and Virginia all have 1 player. The team even has an international player from Australia and 5 sets of brothers!

Players have come from as close as 1 mile and as far away 9,844 miles away all to play football for the Michigan State football team. Jack Bouwmeester came from Australia. This is his first season with the team and he did not grow up playing American football. Jack has been quoted in other articles¹ saying he was speechless when walking out of the tunnel for the first time and that it was hard to describe what he saw. He has also said he wants to make everyone proud and not let them down. Reid Burton grew up in East Lansing. He did not have to go far to attend Michigan State University. In an article² published in 2016 Reid said *"It's just an opportunity I couldn't pass up. I thought about it, the chance to play Big Ten football, stay at home and get a really good education, there really wasn't that much to think about after that actually so I just made the decision and I'm happy I made it. I'm excited to get to work."*

Imagine growing up playing football with your brother in your backyard and now you play at Spartan Stadium together. 5 sets of brothers, including 1 set of twins, get to run out of the tunnel to the song "Thunderstruck" together at every home game. One of the 5 sets of brothers is

Tate and Tanner Hallock. Tate stands at 6'5" while his younger brother is near 6'1". These two brothers enjoy having someone they have known their whole life on their team. Tanner said, "*It just makes football easier.*" It helps keep them to their high standards. Sure, you might think there would be things they don't like about having a brother being on their team. But for this set of brothers they don't really have anything that they don't like about having a brother on the team. They did have a lot of good things to say about having a brother on the team. Tate said, "*We help keep each other motivated and it helps to have someone who has known you basically your whole life.*" Tate and Tanner said they don't really fight about football a lot and try not to talk about football way too much when they hang out. When asked who the better football player is, they both agree that Tate is better!

Any team is only as good as the people who make up the team. The Michigan State football team is made up of players with all different types of backgrounds who have to come together to be a team and win football games. All of these different connections, players, and coaches make up this great team. Go Spartans!!

(1) Source: <https://www.mlive.com/spartans/2018/12/the-10000-mile-journey-that-led-aust>

(2) Source: http://www.homtv.net/index_homtv.asp?view=story&news_id=7737ralian-punter-jack-bouwmeester-to-michigan-state.html

(3) Interview with Tate and Tanner Hallock done by Ryder Thomasson on November 21st, 2019