

MICAHA'S MOMENT



Photo by Caitlin Lee/Collegian

Led by Micah Parsons, the Penn State defense delivered another memorable White Out moment with their fourth quarter goal line stand

By Benjamin Ferree
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

As Micah Parsons sat at the corner of the podium following Penn State's 28-21 win over Michigan he was asked about KJ Hamler and his ability to make big plays in big moments.

His response was simple. "The greatest players step-up when it's time to step-up."

And while Parsons was talking about his electric teammate, he could've been talking about himself.

Penn State's defense needed its biggest players in its biggest moment of the 2019 season to date.

And on Saturday night, Micah Parsons was that guy for Penn State's defense.

Parsons tied his career high with 14 tackles, six of which were solo, and played a big role in the gritty performance of the Nittany Lions defense.

It started for Parsons on the second play of the game.

Shea Patterson pulled the ball on a zone read, shrugged off an

arm tackle from Tariq Castro-Fields and looked like he was going to reach the edge, but Parsons was there and delivered a blow sending the quarterback to the Beaver Stadium grass.

The tone was set for Parsons on that play and he only got stronger from there.

"I just really wanted to help this defense," Parsons said. "I really just wanted to prove to everyone 'this is it man.' I think this defense is for real."

Parsons finished the first half with eight total tackles, including four that were solo.

The linebacker was all over the field, scraping down the line of scrimmage, filling holes and causing havoc for the Michigan offense.

Penn State's 'wild dogs' were unusually quiet on an explosive play standpoint on Saturday night, but what they did was absorb blocks and allow the lanes for Parsons to fill and make so many plays.

According to safety Garrett Taylor, another reason Parsons was able to make so many plays

was that he simply does his job.

"He is a special guy, a special player," Garrett Taylor said. "I think he's done a good job making plays in the framework of the defense which is something that we talk about a lot."

"He doesn't do things outside of his call. He is just doing his job in the calls and is making special plays. It's fun to play behind a guy like that. He had a great game, he was flying around."

But for one of Parsons' teammates, he had a little too good of a game.

"Micah gets on my nerves," Lamont Wade said jokingly. "We argue every game about who is going to get more tackles. We do that every game."

Wade came into Saturday night's game second on the team in tackles, just behind Parsons, who Wade eventually admitted is one of his favorite players to be on the field with.

"He is a dog," Wade said. "Whenever he say 'he got this' I believe him. I put my trust into him. It is great being on the field with guys like that."

But as the second half wore on for the Penn State defense, Michigan began to find holes, ones that Parsons couldn't fix himself even though he did his best.

Michigan sensed the shift in momentum as the Wolverines drove down to the field to a first and goal, down 28-14 at the start of the fourth quarter.

They sensed a chance to pull off an upset in a White Out game.

But first they had to get past Micah Parsons.

The linebacker came up on second down and made the stop, filled the hole on third down for a gain of one.

And all of a sudden it was fourth down for Michigan.

Shea Patterson met Parsons on a quarterback sneak, but this time Patterson won.

But Penn State's defense didn't let this affect them.

The next Michigan drive, the Wolverines drove all the way to the goal line with a chance to tie, but on fourth down a dropped pass in the end zone meant that Penn State's strongest unit all season did enough to clinch a win.

And even though Parsons led them statistically, he knows it was a whole team effort to get the victory and every game someone different steps up.

"Each game you have someone that's always doing something good, having a great game," Parsons said. "We called it tag tonight. Tag whoever is going to get to the play first. When you got a great group of guys, especially up front and in the back seven, the back guys and we're all trying to go to the ball."

"Plays are going to happen and you're going to make a lot of plays."

Parsons continued to talk about Hamler in the corner of the podium saying, "when you are able to make that play when the team needs you, that's when you know you are a great player."

On Saturday night, in the White Out game, Parsons made those plays.

Parsons was the great player.

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MY VIEW | DYLAN JACOBS

Pretty or not, Penn State is a contender

There were plenty of games last season where Penn State had its back against the wall.

No team, no matter the talent, can play a perfect game every week. It's all about the response when facing that adversity.

Last year, the Nittany Lions didn't have success in these scenarios.

On Saturday, Penn State was far from perfect.

But it fought through the adversity, showing that this is a team that's tough to beat.

"Every great fighter ends up on the ropes," linebacker Micah Parsons said. "It's how you fight back."

This Penn State defense faced adversity for the first time this season. It was actually tested, and for a while, Michigan was having success.

The Wolverines methodically moved the ball down the field on multiple drives in the second half, and appeared to wear down Penn State's defense.

But when the game was on the line, the defense did just enough to get it done, and it knew it would.

"It was a matter of when we were going to get that stop and how we were going to get that stop," Parsons said.

There were mistakes made across the board, but when a play needed to happen, the Nittany Lions made it happen.

"We didn't play our best in all three phases tonight, but we played well enough to win the game," James Franklin said. "We played really good complementary football. We made plays when it was needed. We made big plays on defense when it was needed. We made big plays on offense when it was needed and the same thing on special teams."

"We will critique the heck out of this, find a way to get better. We will enjoy it the rest of tonight. We are 1-0, that is always the goal."

Last year, Penn State couldn't hold on to leads like this against the likes of Appalachian State, Ohio State and Michigan State, and it cost them against the Buckeyes and Spartans.

Those games now serve as lessons for this team.

"Last year we kind of lost games that came down to the wire like that," cornerback Tariq Castro-Fields said. "So I'm super proud of the guys to be able to finish. It means a whole lot."

This felt like a game that Penn State was destined to lose. If this was last year's team, it probably would have.

A 21-0 lead quickly evaporated, and it seemed like the Nittany Lions were heading for second straight White-Out

disappointment.

But in the offseason, this team worked hard in preparation for moments like this, and it wasn't going to waste it.

"It really shows how much time and work we put in in the offseason, spring ball, to close out games," running back Ricky Slade said.

"I'd say we're really proud of that."

In the second half, the Nittany Lion offense couldn't do much of anything, so the defense was constantly on the ropes.

But they were ready to step up.

"I know we put in the work in the summer and the spring," Castro-Fields said.

"So I knew we were going to be ready when our time was called. Our offense needed us and we stepped up."

This team stepped up in a way that not many have had under James Franklin. His struggles against ranked teams is common knowledge at this point.

But in back-to-back weeks, Penn State has gotten two wins over tough ranked competition.

They weren't pretty games. They weren't technically sound games.

There were many problems on many different facets of the team.

But none of that matters. They were 1-0 this week. They were 1-0 last week.

This is a young team, but it has

learned from the mistakes from the ones that came before them.

What the Nittany Lions want to achieve is right in front of them.

They will be a top-6 team eight weeks into the season.

They now play tough, but winnable road games in the next few weeks.

Fighting for the big prize comes later. Who knows what lies ahead a few weeks from now.

But for right now, Penn State is in it. It's in the race.

Many people outside of the team may not have expected these that they are and the chemistry they have helps when they step on the field.

"This brotherhood that we have right now on the defensive side of the ball is tremendous," Parsons said. "I think that's the difference right now."

Who knows how this season will end, but when a team is so close-knit like they are, anything can happen.

"I feel like this year we have more of a sense of togetherness, brotherhood,"

cornerback Lamont Wade said. "These guys are my brothers. When we go out there, we tell each other every game 'I'm playing for you, I got you.' I told Sean,

KJ, Noah 'I'm playing for you.' And they told me the same thing. I know they're playing for me, I know they got my back.

"So I feel like that sense of togetherness and brotherhood we got is amazing right now. It's really special."

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Caitlin Lee/Collegian

The HUB serves as a late night oasis after dark

By Conner Goetz
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

The HUB-Robeson Center sits in the center of the University Park ecosystem, allowing thousands of students, staff and visitors to pass through its doors and enjoy the multitude of restaurants, classes and activities available daily.

But at night — it's a whole other world. Gone is the familiar hubbub of countless conversations, footsteps and music, and in its place is an unexpected silence, infrequently punctuated by the hum of a distant vacuum cleaner.

This is the HUB at night.

After the crowds have gone home and even the Starbucks is closed, a few stragglers find comfort in the newfound peace and quiet.

"During the day it's packed, pretty lively and loud. At 4 a.m., its empty, pin drop silence, you feel like you're the only one awake in the world," Sanjana Saji said.

Saji (senior-business management) is among the select few on campus that takes advantage of the HUB's late night tranquility. She goes there to study after everyone else has gone home.

"I can sit where ever I want, it's a lot quieter, less distractions and people," Saji said.

Zihao Wang also appreciates the lack of distractions, especially during midterm season.

"Usually the HUB is empty [at the middle of the night] ... it's more convenient," Wang (senior-biological engineering) said.

While other spots around campus may offer more IT support and have late night staff in order to help with research, the HUB's open spaces help some students focus on their work more effectively.

"[I] generally don't like going to the library, is just too close and compact," Shivani Rathod said.

Rathod (senior-biological science and health professions) prefers the HUB for this reason, and doesn't like the cramped feel of the stacks late at night.

Although a short walk away from the majority of the housing areas on campus, some upperclassmen who live off campus still prefer the HUB as their primary study venue.

"[I] can't focus in my apartment, [the] library's too quiet for me, the HUB's a nice medium, it's not too crazy," Nina Matulis said.

Matulis (senior-forensic science) who lives off campus, still regularly makes the commute, and is in the HUB "a couple days a week." Matulis prefers the HUB over the library because of the wide variety of food options available, several of which are open late.

Many underclassmen who have the luxury of on-campus dorms also said they prefer the HUB for late night study sessions.

Dorms are "usually too loud or too distracting, you see someone you know" according to Will Wilson.

Wilson (freshman-plant sciences) has found the HUB to be one of the premier study spots on campus, especially when his peers in East Halls stay up all night.



Students study in the HUB Robeson Center on Wednesday, Oct. 16.

Samantha Wilson/Collegian

New restaurant ‘Bistrozine’ brings Asian fusion eats

State College's recently opened Asian fusion restaurant Bistrozine, located at 409 E. Calder Way, offers a wide-ranging selection of beverages, dim sum and desserts — diversifying it from other Asian eateries in downtown State College.

Upon entering, guests are greeted by contemporary and minimalistic decor.

The restaurant has a booth and table setting, and there is a selection of swing seating by tall glass windows that look over Calder Way.

Additionally, there is a large window looking into the kitchen that allows customers to watch the kitchen staff cook and plate dishes.

From 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. guests can indulge in the restaurant's lunch menu, "Dim Sum and Then Some."

The checklist-style menu showcases a variety of dim sum-style cuisine, accompanied by a customer's choice of tea.

Traditional options including Cha Shao Bao and Xia Jiao are offered in bite size portions. However, more contemporary shareable dishes on the lunch menu include waffles from classic fruit waffles to buffalo chicken.

Regular menus are provided at any time. According to its website, the eatery's traditional menu has multiple sections including something to drink, tea, something to share, rice and ramen and something sweet.

I got to try out some dishes at the restaurant along with my roommate. Although we didn't try the dim sum, we heard rave reviews of the cha shao bao and chi jiao zi from other customers in attendance.

We tried the tonkatsu pork ramen and spicy beef miso ramen, which we paired with coffee on the rock and bright and bubbly drinks.

We both enjoyed our experience with the great food and even better hospitality.

It was a very intimate setting and we were served quickly.

The prices are justified considering the large portion sizes.

Vegan options and spice levels are indicated on the menu, making it easy for customers to gauge their interest in the meal they choose.

Beverages range from milkshakes to puree juices, along with an extensive tea selection.

Every drink is dressed to please the eye. For instance, the cookies and cream milkshake is dressed with cookie butter whipped cream, cookie crumbs and a Twix bar, and the mango monster juice has balled mango swirled at the bottom of the glass and is topped with whipped cream and mango sherbet.

Teas are served in an elegant glass teapot, and they vary from traditional blends to hybrids.

The restaurant carries a premium selection of Chinese oolong, sinseng, white and green teas, and blends like passion fruit lychee, strawberry lemon and mixed fruit.

Shareables at the eatery showcase their Asian-fusion ideas. Typical Asian dishes like edamame and spring rolls are featured on the menu, along with Americanized versions of bacon cheeseburger dumplings and popcorn chicken.

Rice and ramen are sure to satisfy any customer's craving. From the chicken fried rice to the drunken noodles, the dishes are offered in generous portions and either have a twist or are garnished to fit the overall aesthetic of the restaurant.

Some dishes go beyond the category's name like lemongrass tilapia and grilled beef ribs.

Finally for dessert, the fusion aspect comes back to the menu, as well as keeping some American favorites.

Strawberry cheesecake, red velvet cake and fried twinkies are served up for customers that prefer to stick to the classics, while the restaurant offers mochi ice cream, chocolate matcha lava cake and avocado affogato to those that want a more adventurous experience.

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Turning Point USA’s speakers spread hate, not conservatism

Penn State’s chapter of Turning Point USA will bring two YouTubers to speak on campus this week — Carl Benjamin, better known as Sargon of Akkad, and Hunter Avallone — to discuss matters regarding censorship.

Benjamin brands himself as an anti-feminist and caused commotion for tweeting at a member of the British Parliament facing rape threats that “[he] wouldn’t even rape [her].”

Avallone is known for a video he published to YouTube titled “The Truth About Transgenders,” where he criticizes members of the LGBTQ community, adding to hateful discourse that already exists about transgender people.

Benjamin was banned from Twitter in response to the above tweet, and his YouTube channel was demonetized by the platform. According to an April Instagram post

OUR VIEW

Carl Benjamin and Hunter Avallone are not the right voices to share experiences with censorship

from Avallone depicting an alleged message he received from YouTube, Avallone’s YouTube channel was suspended due to violations of “community guidelines.” Since then, he has regained access.

Turning Point USA has every right to bring “conservative” speakers to campus. But bringing speakers like Benjamin and Avallone, known for hateful rhetoric — and then labeling that hate as “conservatism” — crosses a line.

It is important that the university hosts speakers from a variety of views in order to cater toward the entire Penn State community. But “diverse” views are not synonymous with “hateful” views — individuals’ whose “opinions”

revolve around threatening marginalized group of people should not be invited to speak at the university.

The alleged purpose behind the talk is to discuss censorship of “big technology,” which pertains to Avallone and Benjamin in the sense that they were banned from specific social media platforms.

Platforms like YouTube and Twitter can ban those who publish hateful rhetoric at their discretion, but these users can still find other platforms — like the talk hosted by Turning Point USA — to continue voicing these thoughts.

Turning Point USA can claim the event will be held just to discuss censorship, but it is impossible for Avallone and

Benjamin to talk about why they were censored without further projecting the hateful messages they promote.

It is disappointing Turning Point USA chose Benjamin and Avallone over others who may have been able to speak to their experiences with censorship on mature and civil levels.

On its website, Penn State lists policies about intolerance directed toward students and faculty, but does not explicitly state requirements for speakers on campus. Free speech is protected in this country and on Penn State’s campus.

But when groups of people feel threatened by messages someone is sending on our campus, speech should be

reasonably limited. Avallone and Benjamin take pride in spreading hate about groups who are already oppressed.

Hopefully, those in attendance at Turning Point USA’s event will see the two’s deplorable true colors through what will likely transpire: Avallone and Benjamin’s notoriously hateful, uneducated and disgraceful rhetoric.

A discussion on censorship does not have to be rooted in potentially hateful speech, but it’s looking like Turning Point USA’s event could shape up to be just that.

The organization could have an opportunity to start a productive conversation about censorship. Unfortunately, though the event hasn’t even happened yet, the opportunity for civil conversation to transpire at the talk might as well be scorched already by virtue of who its guest speakers are.

MY VIEW | Cassandra Kidwell

The meme takeover: Reflecting on the use of memes since their origin

Two weeks ago, President Donald Trump tweeted the famous Nickelback meme from the music video “Photograph,” with a caption in all caps “LOOK AT THIS PHOTOGRAPH.” The video showed the meme of Chad Kroeger holding a framed photo of former Vice President Joe Biden, his son Hunter Biden, along with a man labeled “Ukraine Gas Exec” and another unnamed individual, as the famous lyrics played in the background.

The best part of the Trump meme fiasco was that it was removed by Nickelback due to copyright issues. This is a meme within itself — Canadian Rock band Nickelback copy strikes United States President Trump for use of music in meme, and as a result the song saw a nearly 40 percent surge in listens between Oct. 2 and Oct. 3, according to Nielsen music data.

I am unsure whether Trump requested his media team to make the video or if it was found from a random user, but someone in the Trump administration determined that the

video would be effective to post — and many corporations feel the same about memes.

From the downloading of trash-meme apps like iFunny on my iPod Touch, the large text, stand-out meme photo was integrated into my internet humor since I was young, along with many other generations around me. It seems when any worldly event happens, memes are created, but why are they so commonly used?

One reason could be the community engagement memes create. Despite the offensive humor that may come out of memes, they truly have the power to engage internet communities locally, or even worldwide.

The sometimes offensive nature of memes cannot be taken too seriously — as that is a big part of meme content. Taking an idea that may anger the world, like political climate or social situations and “mimifying” it, adds humor and light-heartedness to a touchy subject, truly giving it some rhetoric value.

The effectiveness of memes in marketing is seen by creating a casual bond between corporation and consumer, as if the corporation is a person that can reply and joke with consumers.

Elon Musk, the face of Tesla demonstrates the feeling of a casual consumer, corporation relationship in being very active on social media. With 26 million followers, he posts jokes, memes and brand updates, and

is a big reason why I personally became aware of Tesla and kept following the company.

But, memes can sometimes take a bad turn, as seen by the U.S. Airforce when they learned that memes and war, are not a good mix. During the sensation of the Yanny vs. Laurel debacle (which one did you hear from the recording), the U.S Air Force tried to join in on the fun, tweeting that the Taliban would much rather be hearing Yanny or Laurel, rather than the wrath of the United States missiles. Their

approach did not hit the mark as many called the tweet insensitive to the war going on.

Lastly, and most importantly, is the simple humor of a good meme. Memes are easy, and they develop with a society. There is a reason dated memes like Bad News Brian, Rickrolling, and the immense amount of troll faces, are no longer in use — memes are constantly changing with the humor of creators and readers.

Mass replication of memes is also an easy form of consumption. The word “meme” actually stems from an ancient Greek work “mimeme” meaning “that which is imitated.”

While the premise of memes is certainly replication of pictures and topics — like the two month “Storm Area 51” meme that seemed to never go away — they keep many enticed in seeing what kind of meme variation could develop.

But the cycle continues: current memes will ultimately become old memes, we will move on, and those who make memes will keep on meme-ing.

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Kidwell

“The effectiveness of memes in marketing is seen by creating a casual bond between corporation and consumer...”

Cassandra Kidwell

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KJ Hamler comes up big again

By Evan Patrick
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

Three plays in the second half shaped the outcome of the annual White Out game in Beaver Stadium — they were all made by KJ Hamler.

FOOTBALL

It looked like Penn State would be able to ride out a multiple score lead after an explosive first half, but then the offense stalled out, giving Michigan a chance.

After going up 21-0, the Nittany Lions had five straight drives that ended in punts, and Michigan crawled its way back into the contest.

But on that sixth drive, Hamler took the top off the Wolverines defense for a 53-yard score and injected the fourth-largest crowd in Beaver Stadium history with the energy it had been lacking since the first half.

“I knew as soon as I looked at the coverage,” Hamler said.

Michigan’s defense seemed lost pre-snap, and when the weak side safety stepped up, Hamler took his route to that side of the field, leaving his defender in the dust and was in acres of space.

“That was just coverage recognition, basically, me reading the coverage and picking the right route,” Hamler said. “Most of the time I have three different options in a play, so just reading the coverage recognition and it was just wide open for me. I just thank the lineman for holding up and thank [Sean Clifford] for putting it there, we’ve been practicing that all week.”

The relationship between Clifford and Hamler is something special, and it continues to grow as the season goes on.

The two have known each other dating back to high school when Clifford recruited Hamler to join him at Penn State, with the pitch that nights like these were what the future held.

“I’m just so excited that he’s playing so well, he’s the hot



Caitlin Lee/Collegian

Wide receiver KJ Hamler (1) celebrates a touchdown during the White Out game against Michigan on Saturday, Oct. 19.

hand,” Sean Clifford said. “I’m just trying to get him the ball as much as possible, you know, we talked about it in high school and now just everything coming together, it’s very cool.”

Hamler finished the night with six receptions for 108 yards and two touchdowns, but Hamler’s favorite play wasn’t the explosive 53-yard touchdown, it was actually the play before.

On third down and five, backed up in their own territory, the Nittany Lions had just given up a touchdown to the Wolverines and

the offense hadn’t done anything in five drives — it looked like another three and out was on tap.

“If I had to choose [my favorite play] I would choose the third down conversion that I made, it was a read-route, I caught a slant across the middle, keeping our team alive, I think that helps us confidence-wise and field position-wise as well.”

Hamler converted, giving the offense its first first down in what seemed like forever, and the very next

play was the touchdown that ended up being the difference in the

end — but not without one last bit of magic from No. 1.

The defense did its job, and shut down what would end up being Michigan’s last offensive effort.

“We really had to stay calm, I think the defense did a heck of a job on that goal line stand,” Hamler said. “That really helped us and gave us way more confidence.”

But when Penn State got the ball back deep inside its own territory, the team needed a first down to run out the clock fully.

Two plays gained seven yards, and with just under two minutes remaining, the Nittany Lions’ offense was faced with a third down and three to convert for the win.

The junior receiver took the handoff from his quarterback and ran it up the middle.

“I haven’t played running back since little league, so that was something new for me,” Hamler said.

“It was a hard hit but I had to do what I had to do for the team.”

The receiver, and part-time running back, was hurt on the play, but eventually walked off the field under his own power, and to the crowd chanting his name.

“I wasn’t nervous, I was telling everybody on the offense ‘this is how legends are made, we gotta do something legendary right now,’” Hamler said. “Last year we lost the White Out, I really wasn’t going home with a loss under my belt, so us as a team, we stuck it out, we ride together we die together.”

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Clifford still feels he has more to show

By Caleb Wilfonger
THE DAILY COLLEGIAN

All season long, Sean Clifford has exuded nothing but confidence.

FOOTBALL

And why shouldn’t he be confident? After all, Clifford is undefeated in his first seven starts at the collegiate level, and is a big reason why some Penn State fans are dreaming about big things for this season.

But as the redshirt sophomore quarterback sat in Penn State’s media room following the biggest win of his career as a starter, he still had some reservations about his performance at this point in the season.

“I think I’ve played well, certainly well enough to win games,” Clifford said. “But at the same time, I know that I’m not playing my best football yet and I can do so much more for the team.”

On Saturday, Clifford didn’t play a perfect game, but it was about as good as the Nittany Lions could have hoped for.

Clifford finished the game with a relatively pedestrian statline through the air — 14-of-25 for 182 yards — but his four total touchdowns and poise in the pocket

against a stout Michigan front seven were imperative in the 28-21 victory.

More importantly, he finished the game without a turnover, making it the fifth game in his seven starts that the quarterback has not turned the ball over.

“It’s definitely a big thing that I can minimize those mistakes, but I have to give the offensive line, the receivers and running backs credit,” Clifford said.

“I’m proud that I’ve only turned the ball over twice [this season], but at the same time, I know that I shouldn’t have two turnovers because they were both my fault.”

Despite an already strong season under center, the young quarterback is clearly not satisfied with “good enough”, and still wants to take his game to the next level.

Part of that is determining how he should approach a key aspect of his game, one that has been an essential component to Clifford’s weekly approach for as long as he can remember.

To his teammates and coaches, Clifford is a fierce competitor. But throughout this season, the Cincinnati native has made it a point of personal emphasis to bottle up that competitive fire and not let it consume him.



Caitlin Lee/Collegian

Quarterback Sean Clifford (14) dives into the end zone for a touchdown during the White Out game against Michigan on Saturday, Oct. 19. No. 7 Penn State defeated No. 16 Michigan 28-21.

“I’ve been trying to figure out what kind of quarterback I want to be,” Clifford said.

“In high school, I was always a vocal guy — and I still want to be that guy — but now I’m trying to stay calm and settle down during games. I think that helps me focus and give us the best chance to win.”

That competitive fire and resilience was under control in the first half, and with it came the return of the deep ball to Penn State’s attack.

In previous games, the Nittany Lions struggled with the deep ball. Either the timing had been off between Clifford and a receiver, or the throw by Clifford was slightly off and it resulted in the Nittany Lions being unable to capitalize on explosive plays.

But on Saturday night, Clifford hit Pat Freiermuth for the first touchdown of the game. He then connected with KJ Hamler on two deep throws for touchdowns,

the second of which stopped a 14-0 Wolverines run and would end up being the game-winning touchdown for Penn State.

“We just wanted Sean [Clifford] to have opportunities to get the ball to KJ [Hamler] as much as possible,” James Franklin said. “He’s doing some really nice things for us in terms of managing the game, and he’s growing with each start.”

Prior to Saturday’s matchup, former Heisman Trophy-winning wide receiver — and current ESPN College GameDay panelist — Desmond Howard mentioned that he was not yet sold on Clifford, or this Penn State team, until the first-year starter proved himself against the best the Big Ten has to offer.

“I have to see [Sean] Clifford against better competition,” Howard said. “He’s been good against

defenses that can offer some sort of resistance, but not great or exceptional.”

It’s safe to say that the young quarterback passed Howard’s test on Saturday, and did it mostly on his own volition.

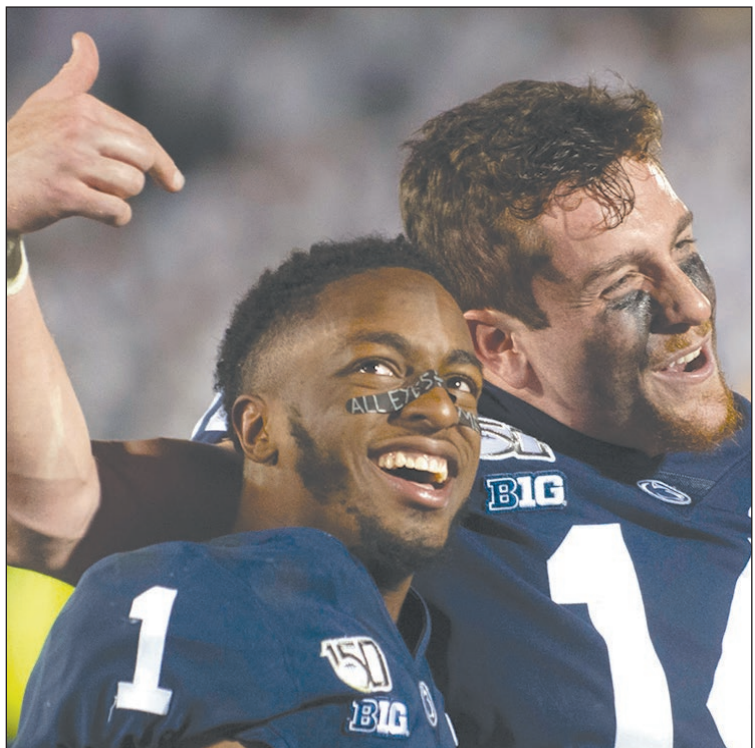
On a day in which the Nittany Lions were punched in the mouth by a solid Michigan team and didn’t get much production from their stable of running backs, Clifford took the reigns of the offense and showed poise and leadership down the stretch.

So while he will analyze the tape in the coming days and devise ways to take his game up a notch, Saturday was still a big step forward for Sean Clifford, and the rest of this Penn State team.

“There was never a time in this game where any of us were looking around feeling like we weren’t going to win,” Clifford said.

“That’s the mentality that I’ve learned from all of the work we did in the spring and summer, and I try to play with that same level of intensity because I don’t want to let those guys down.”

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Follow him on Twitter at [@caleb_wilfonger](https://twitter.com/caleb_wilfonger).



Samantha Wilson/Collegian

Quarterback Sean Clifford (14) celebrates with wide receiver KJ Hamler (1) after the win against Michigan at Beaver Stadium on Oct. 19.



Caitlin Lee/Collegian

Tight end Pat Freiermuth (87) celebrates a touchdown during the White Out game against Michigan at Beaver Stadium on Oct. 19.



Samantha Wilson/Collegian

Cornerback Tariq Castro-Fields (5), safety Lamont Wade (38) and safety Jaquan Brisker (7) celebrate an interception.



Caitlin Lee/Collegian

Quarterback Sean Clifford (14) rings the victory bell after the win against Michigan.

WHITE OUT WIPEOUT



Lily LaRegina/Collegian

Linebacker Micah Parsons (11) tackles Michigan running back Hassan Haskins (25).



Ken Minamoto/Collegian

Wide receiver KJ Hamler (1) catches the ball for a touchdown in the second quarter.



WHAT IT TAKES

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