

By Tom Borrelli  
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## Pointing the Way

1

### Super scorer Caulcrick leads Michigan State into bowl

Anyone who watched Jehuu Caulcrick run roughshod over his high school competition during his Connolly Cup-winning career at Clymer shouldn't be surprised to see his name among the nation's top collegiate scorers.

Because when the goal line is in sight, the 6-foot, 255-pound senior running back at Michigan State calls upon an extra gear.

"I love the fact that if we're at the 5, or at the 2, and I'm going in the game, everybody pretty much knows I'm getting the football," said Caulcrick, who carried 207 times for 813 yards and a school-record 21 touchdowns in 12 games, which has him tied for sixth in Division I-A with 10.5 points per contest. "I know I'm not going to let one or even two people bring me down before I get to the end zone."

Caulcrick's efforts have helped his Spartans (7-5) earn a spot in the Champs Sports Bowl on Dec. 28 in Orlando, Fla. against No. 14 Boston College (10-3) The Atlantic Coast Conference runner-up making its ninth straight bowl appearance. The Eagles have won their last seven bowl games for the longest active streak in college football.

The game should offer a perfect contrast in styles. Caulcrick's Spartans average 200.3 rushing yards per game while the Eagles allow just 68.1

It will be Michigan State's 18th postseason bowl appearance, but its first since a 17-3 loss to Nebraska in the 2003 Alamo Bowl in San Antonio, Texas, when Caulcrick was redshirting as a freshman.

"I traveled with them that year but it just doesn't mean the same thing if you're not playing," said Caulcrick, who graduated with a sociology degree Dec. 8. "I think it's going to be a much different experience going to a warm climate to play in a bowl game."

Caulcrick, who was named The New Player of the Year during his senior year in high school, came to Findley Lake as a refugee from civil war in Liberia, West Africa. He fled his homeland for Chautauqua County with his mother and sister after his father was killed in the war.

The Western New York high school football record book still looks like

Caulcrick's journal. The 706 career points he scored as a Pirate are nearly 200 more than anybody else, and his 6,559 rushing yards are best by nearly 700 yards.

But success didn't come quickly at Michigan State.

"Every time we didn't go to a bowl game I'd have to sit back and be forced to watch which teams we'd played against, and it was frustrating," said Caulcrick, who led the Spartans in rushing touchdowns during his final three seasons. "But this is a great feeling. It's like all the hard work is finally paying off."

The Spartans went a combined 14-21 in his first three seasons under head coach John L. Smith, during which he scored 19 total TDs. He's surpassed the total this year under new coach Mark Dantonio, who took Cincinnati to bowl games in two of three seasons he spent with the Bearcats.

"I have really enjoyed playing with this staff," said Caulcrick, whose career total includes 2,336 yards on 517 rushing attempts. "They've been more enthused to be here and were really able to use the running game to set up the passing game."

His most enjoyable moment as a Spartan came Nov. 17, when he kept the winning drive alive by running for a first down on a fake punt, then scored from the 1 with four minutes left to give his team a 35-31 win over Penn State. The Nittany Lions led, 24-7, early in the second half. It was an especially sweet moment, considering the Spartans lost to top-ranked Ohio State (24-17) and preseason No. 5 Michigan (28-24), who finished first and tied for second, respectively, in the Big Ten.

"That was Senior Day and we just kept fighting and fighting," said Caulcrick, who runs 4.41 in the 40. "It was a total team effort and just felt so unreal to get it done. Hopefully we'll feel that way again after the bowl game."

"The biggest jump for a running back from high school to college is pass protection, and Jehuu Caulcrick and Javon Ringer have helped me out a lot in that area," said freshman running back Ashton Leggett. "It's easy to get frustrated if you don't properly identify where the blitz is coming from. I really appreciate those two guys for spending extra time with me to improve my pass-blocking skills."

Once the bowl game ends, Caulcrick plans to hire an agent and begin training for what he hopes is a professional football career. His running style has been favorably compared to that of future Hall of Famer Jerome Bettis, the NFL's fifth-leading rusher all-time with 13,662 yards in 13 seasons with the Rams and Steelers.

"When it's all said and done here, I'll get ready for the combines and go from there," said Caulcrick, who has scored at least once in the nine games this season. "I'm trying not to listen to people talking about 'you'll be a second-round pick' and that kind of stuff. I just want my actions to speak for themselves because absolutely nothing is guaranteed to you."