

SPORTS



HOCKEY
Trevor Nill, left, and the hockey team took four points against Western Michigan this weekend. For the full story, see statenews.com/sports.

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Monday



JASON CHIOU/THE STATE NEWS

Sophomore midfielder Spencer Thompson, right, hugs senior defender David Hertel after defeating Northwestern 1-0 and being named Big Ten regular season champions Sunday afternoon at DeMartin Stadium at Old College Field.

STORYBOOK ENDING

MSU wins first regular season Big Ten title in Baum's final home game

By Alex DiFilippo
THE STATE NEWS

A lot was on the line Sunday afternoon for the No. 25 MSU men's soccer team at DeMartin Stadium at Old College Field.

If the Spartans could get the win over No. 6 Northwestern, it would mark the first time in program history the team won the regular season Big Ten Championship.

On top of that, it was the last home game for head coach Joe Baum, who has held the reins of the program for the last 32 years.

Plus, if MSU could find a way to win, it would earn the valuable bye in the first round of the Big Ten Tournament.

Sure enough, the Spartans rose to the occasion and earned the 1-0 victory to secure the title and send their coach out on top for the very first time.

"It couldn't be any better," Baum said. "My feeling was I just wanted to have a solid season so I could turn this program over to Damon (Rensing) in respectable shape. I didn't envision this and it's more than I could ever ask for."

Senior forward Louis Stephens III scored the lone goal of the game in the 53rd minute and the Spartans (11-5-1 overall, 5-1 Big Ten) held on defensively to keep the Wildcats off the board.

See **GAME** on page 2B

Men's
soccer
ALEX DIFILIPPO

Baum leaves lasting mark on MSU soccer



It couldn't have been scripted any better.

The MSU men's soccer team sent head coach Joe Baum out on top and accomplished something never before seen in the program's history — winning a regular season Big Ten title. In the 32 years Baum has

See **DIFILIPPO** on page 2B

University community celebrates Baum's 32 years as head coach

By Jacob Carpenter
THE STATE NEWS

Surrounded by friends, soccer alumni from all eras and his newly crowned Big Ten championship team, the bearded face of MSU soccer was bid farewell Sunday.

Men's soccer head coach Joe Baum, whose 318 career wins in 32 seasons at MSU are the most in Spartan history, rode Sunday into the sunset covered by gray clouds above DeMartin Stadium at Old College Field in his final home game as head coach.

Dozens of Baum's disciples from three decades of coaching, many wearing T-shirts declaring them part of the "Baum Squad," returned to East Lansing for the 1-0 win over Northwestern, which secured Baum's first Big Ten regular season title.

Alumni ventured from as far west as Seattle and as east as Boston in honor of the grizzled head coach who will cede the position to head coach designate Damon Rensing.

"Looking up and seeing these past players, it's just breathtaking," said Baum, wearing a green Spartan jacket, a Big Ten championship hat and a wide smile. "It's almost surreal out here to see all my friends and past players and parents and alumni. It's like a dream and it's one of the happiest moments of my life."

See **BAUM** on page 2B

ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT WEIGHS IN Reflecting on coach Baum's 32-year tenure

In case you missed it ...

Joe Baum coached his final regular season home game Sunday afternoon as the Spartans captured the Big Ten regular season title with a 1-0 win over No. 6 Northwestern. Here is what some of his peers (and his boss) had to say about his impending retirement.

More online ...
For video from Sunday's Big Ten title win, visit statenews.com/multimedia



"He's an even-keel guy who I think is very good at what he does. He's done it here through some times when there wasn't even an emphasis put on (soccer) and that's hard. It's so neat to see the new field and it's so neat to see him having a great year."

Tom Izzo
men's basketball head coach



"Joe's done a great job, but I think he's way too young to retire. He does things the way Michigan State believes in and that's with class and with dignity and by doing things the right way. I think everyone is very proud of him and I wish him the best."

Rick Comley
hockey head coach



"First of all, I came to school in the '80s, and he was the coach then, and when I came back as assistant athletic director he was still here. He is a true old-school, loyal coach. That loyalty is not only to the institution, but to the young men that competed for him."

Mark Hollis
Athletics Director



"He's the most influential person outside of my family in my life. (He's) totally a mentor and I feel very fortunate to be hired by him in 1986. ... He's a great soccer coach and a great Spartan, but more important than anything else is that he's a great human being."

Tom Saxton
women's soccer coach



"The thing that I think speaks volumes is in 30 years how many people he has affected — not just as a coach but the people at the university. Hopefully, everybody here understands how important that is to the university as a whole."

Mark Dantonio
football head coach