

# the game

## Basketball vs. Penn State

Tipoff at 12:00 noon Sunday

**Follow the game**  
TV Big Ten Network  
Radio WJIM 1240-AM

**Keep an eye on ...**  
Penn State forward  
Jameille Cornley, who is  
averaging 21 points over  
his last four games.

**Last meeting**  
MSU beat Penn State  
78-73 in State Col-  
lege, Penn., on Jan. 14.

**Extra point**  
Penn State is on a three-  
game winning streak.

Senior center's journey, strides in the classroom show some goals are never out of reach



JEANA-DEE ALLEN/THE STATE NEWS

Senior center Idong Ibok greets fans as he exits the court after defeating Oklahoma State 94-79 on Nov. 28 at the Old Spice Classic in Orlando, Fla.



## more than HOOP dreams

**Idong Ibok made the journey from Lagos, Africa to Montverde, Fla. to play high school basketball. He was then recruited by MSU head basketball coach Tom Izzo to play for the Spartans.**

ILLUSTRATION BY CHELSEA MCGORISKI/THE STATE NEWS

*"I want to pursue a master's degree in advertising because I plan on utilizing the skills that I would gain from this program to pursue a career in advertising. My long-term goal is to positively impact the advertising practices in my home country of Nigeria and introduce more creative and productive ways of marketing to West Africa as a whole." — Idong Ibok's graduate school personal statement for the Department of Advertising, Public Relations and Retailing*

**By Joey Nowak**  
THE STATE NEWS

People say Idong Ibok will be the president of Nigeria someday. Coaches who have seen him play basketball and grow through different stages of life echo each others' thoughts — there's more to the player than a presence in the post. But Ibok just laughs.

The 6-foot-11 senior center on the men's basketball team deflects the spotlight.

Ibok immigrated to the United States from Lagos, Nigeria to play high school basketball near Orlando before coming to MSU in 2004.

Since then, he's earned an undergraduate degree in telecommunication, information studies and media and is pursuing his master's in advertising. For these reasons, many who have met Ibok ponder what kind of impact he could someday have on his home country. Although he first shies from the question, Ibok taps into an undeniable truth and desire before answering: "I don't think that's a bad idea."

### A comfort

About a year before he was born, Ibok's mother gave birth to a girl who

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### Idong Ibok

6-foot-11  
260 pounds  
Center

**2005-06:** 3.9 minutes per game, 0.4 points per game, 0.9 rebounds per game

**2006-07:** 10.3 minutes per game, 2 points per game, 2.3 rebounds per game

**2007-08:** 5.4 minutes per game, 0.5 points per game, 1 rebound per game

### CAREER HIGHS

**Minutes:** 19 — vs. Iowa (Feb. 17, 2007)

**Points:** Seven — two times, last vs. Indiana (Jan. 7, 2007)

**Rebounds:** Six — three times, last vs. Indiana (Jan. 7, 2007)

**Free throws:** Three — vs. IPFW (Dec. 6, 2006)

SOURCE: MSU ATHLETIC COMMUNICATIONS

To hear Tom Izzo and Idong Ibok talk about Ibok's time at MSU, visit [stateneews.com/multimedia](http://stateneews.com/multimedia).