

SPORTS EVENTS

NCAA TOURNAMENT

When MSU hosted the first two rounds of the women's basketball NCAA Tournament in 2007, 21,340 basketball lovers passed through Breslin Center's gates. MSU will host the tournament again this year on March 22 and 24, and tickets are still available.

Due to other ticket arrangements, fans may not be positioned in the same seat throughout the tournament.

Tickets are available to adults for \$40 and to seniors, children, students and groups of 15 or more for \$20 for two games on March 22 and one on March 24. Tickets can be purchased from the Spartan Ticket Office by phone at 1-800-GO-STATE or online at www.msuspartans.com.

RESULTS

Sunday

Baseball 5, Xavier 11
Women's gymnastics 195.675, New Hampshire 195.350

Saturday

Men's basketball 70, Ohio State 82
Softball 4, Missouri 10
Softball 10, Coastal Carolina 8
Women's tennis 6, Gonzaga 1

Friday

Men's basketball 64, Minnesota 56
Baseball 7, Quinnipiac 3
Baseball 2, Quinnipiac 4
Softball 2, North Carolina 7
Softball 5, Coastal Carolina 6
Men's tennis 1, Tulsa 6
Women's tennis 0, Washington 7

THIS WEEK

Friday

Men's basketball vs. Robert Morris, 11 a.m. TBA
Baseball vs. Oakland, 3:05 p.m.
Men's tennis at Iowa, 2 p.m.

Saturday

Baseball vs. Oakland, 1:05 p.m.
Softball at Ohio State, 2 p.m.
Women's tennis vs. Iowa, noon
Gymnastics Big Ten Championships at Champaign, Ill., 2 p.m.

Sunday

Men's basketball NCAA Tournament second round
Baseball vs. Oakland, 1:05 p.m.
Softball at Ohio State, 2 p.m.
Women's tennis vs. Minnesota, 11 a.m.
Men's tennis at Minnesota, noon

HOCKEY

The MSU hockey team was swept out of the CCHA playoffs, page 4B

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Monday

BIG TEN LETDOWNS



Senior center Goran Sutton waits to hear the call after diving for a ball during the first half of Friday's game against Minnesota at Conoco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. Sutton 10 rebounds during the game. The Spartans won their first game at the 2009 Big Ten Tournament 64-56. **ANDREW WRIGHT/ THE STATE NEWS**

Poor shooting day costs MSU chance at title

By Alex Altman
THE STATE NEWS

After his team's season-ending victory against Purdue, MSU senior guard Travis Walton made a bold guarantee during the Senior Day celebration. "We're gonna raise another banner up in here," said Walton, moments before the team hoisted its 2008-09 regular season championship banner into the rafters.

If the Spartans are going to make Walton a prophet, they'll now have to do it in the NCAA Tournament. The Spartans were eliminated in the semifinals of the Big Ten Tournament on Saturday, falling to Ohio State 82-70 at Conoco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. The loss ended MSU's bid to sweep the Big Ten regular season title and conference tournament for the first time since 2000. Although MSU defeated Minnesota in the quarterfinals, there are very few positives for the Spartans to extract from the tournament.

Poor shooting, untimely turnovers and underwhelming performances from its stars were just some of the areas in which the Spartans struggled — especially against the Buckeyes. "Today it was on the players," Walton said after the loss. "We didn't execute the game plan out. Coach said you've got to give credit to them because if you are open you've got to make that shot. We had some open looks and we didn't make theirs." The Spartans shot 38 percent from the

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Men's basketball

CASH KRUTH

Many factors led to loss to Ohio State



With the Big Ten Tournament done and the NCAA Tournament on the horizon, men's basketball reporter Cash Kruth examines four questions surround-

ing the Spartans as they look to rebound from a disappointing conference tournament with a deep run in the NCAA Tournament.

Question What went wrong against Ohio State? **Answer** What didn't go wrong? The Spartans couldn't shoot and they couldn't defend, but the most pressing issue is that the most important of their Big three, junior forward Raymar Morgan, didn't show up. Sophomore guard Kalin Lucas got his (17 points), while senior center Goran Sutton (who didn't get the ball enough in the first half) was out of the equation late as the Spartans tried to mount a comeback.

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Turnovers doom MSU in quarterfinal loss to Wisconsin

By Joey Nowak
THE STATE NEWS

The MSU women's basketball team failed to capitalize on an opportunity to seal the deal on an NCAA Tournament spot and, instead, put itself back on the bubble with a loss to Wisconsin in the Big Ten Tournament quarterfinals last weekend.

The Spartans, who have now dropped three of their last four games, lost 56-50 after surrendering an early lead to a Wisconsin team whose defensive pressure forced the Spartans out of sync. It was their first game of the weekend, after drawing a first-round bye as the two-seed.

Redshirt freshman forward Lykendra Johnson and junior forward Aisha Jefferson gave an inspired effort in the final minutes to claw back within three points after Wisconsin had assumed a 47-38 lead. But it was too little, too late. "That late, because we were running out of time. We're just



Junior center Allyssa DeHaan walks down the court after missing a basket against Wisconsin in the Big Ten Tournament at Conoco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis. The Spartans lost their first game in the tournament 56-50. **GABRIELLE MOORE/ THE STATE NEWS**

trying to turn it up at the end, just because we were running out of time," Jefferson said. "We should have started like that the second half, and we were just thinking about trying to score at that time." Jefferson and Johnson had 15 and 12 points, respectively, but the Spar-

tans committed 25 turnovers to the Badgers' 17. "Those were turnovers for touchdowns," MSU head coach Suzey Merchant said. "We've been turning it over, but they haven't been as severe. And then obviously

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Women's basketball

JOSEPH TERRY

Late-season losses concern for Spartans



As the MSU women's basketball team waits to hear its NCAA Tournament fate tonight, it has a lot to look forward to in what could be an exciting postseason. How well the Spartans do in the coming weeks has a lot to do with which MSU team shows up. Will it be the team that has looked like giant killers, grinding down Ohio State and Purdue to submission, winning games even without a true point guard? Or will it be the Spartans who threw away

their chances at a long March run with another 20-plus turnover game, as they did twice against a smaller and less-skilled Wisconsin squad?

The team has been an enigma ever since the loss of sophomore point guard Brittney Thomas to a season-ending knee injury Feb. 6, struggling to find someone to run the point, finding a combo that works, then playing horribly the next game as the grouping shows up on the floor.

In the first game without Thomas, MSU surprised Ohio State, meticulously attacking the lane and pulling down rebounds with ease with a super big lineup featuring five starters over 6-foot-1. Then, after wins by Indiana and home against Michigan, as the team moved into first place in the Big Ten, the team didn't show up for a game at Wisconsin, taking off the first 10 minutes of a game and ended up losing by three points.

After another bad loss to Minnesota, in which the Spartans, the biggest, most physical team in the league, got

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