

The State News



Seeding keeps MSU close to home



ANGELI WRIGHT/THE STATE NEWS

Junior guard Isalah Dahلمان, left, and senior center Idong Ibok celebrate as the team watches the NCAA Tournament selection show on Sunday at Breslin Center. The Spartans were named the No. 2 seed in the Midwest and will be playing Robert Morris on Friday in Minneapolis.

Spartans won't travel outside of 'Big Ten country' en route to Final Four in Detroit

"You can't sit there and say, 'I wish I would have did this. I wish I would have done that.' You have to do it now."

Travis Walton, senior guard

By Cash Ruch
THE STATE NEWS

The highs, lows and inconsistencies of the MSU men's basketball team's regular season are in the past. All that matters now is that the Spartans (22-6) are officially in one-and-done territory, learning Sunday evening they earned the No. 2 seed in the NCAA Tournament Midwest Regional, drawing No. 15 seed Robert Morris in the first round on Friday at the Metrodome in Minneapolis.

"When you start preaching one-and-done time, it's easy to preach it, but you have to go through it," MSU head coach Tom Izzo said. "I think everybody realized after watching the tape (against Ohio State) we did not play great."

"I kind of know where we are — I think we still have some work to do — but I think we'll have a good three, four days (of practice) ahead of us."

Tip-off time against the Colonials is set for approximately 9:50 p.m.

MSU's path to a potential Final Four trip at Ford Field in Detroit would never take them farther than

630 miles from East Lansing. The first two games will be held at the Metrodome, while the Sweet 16 and Elite Eight would be held at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

"That would be a storybook dream," Izzo said of his team's potential road to Detroit. "... It's still (tall about) if you can get out of the first weekend, which we all know can be very difficult. But going to Indy would be great for us. All three places are in Big Ten country."

MSU's No. 2 seed marks its highest NCAA Tournament position since the Spartans were seeded No. 1 for three consecutive seasons from 1999-2001.

The berth also is MSU's 12th consecutive trip to the tournament, the fourth-longest active streak in the nation. Arizona (25 straight), Kansas (20) and Duke (14) extended their streaks Sunday, while Kentucky failed to

make the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 17 years.

The No. 1 seed in the Midwest is Louisville (28-5), which also earned the top overall seed in the tournament. The Big East regular season and postseason tournament champions are joined by Pittsburgh (East), North Carolina (South) and Connecticut (West) as the other No. 1 seeds.

Robert Morris went 24-10 overall and 15-3 in the Northeast Conference, winning both the NEC regular season and NEC Tournament championships.

The Colonials have three players averaging double figures in scoring, led by NEC Conference Player of the Year Jeremy Chappell with 16.9 points per game. Forward Rob Robinson averages 11.4 for the Colonials, while guard Jim-

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FUNDRAISING

Donations to universities may decline in next 2 years

By Justin Harris
THE STATE NEWS

Although charitable giving to higher education in the U.S. reached an all-time high in fiscal 2008, MSU officials don't expect that trend to continue this year.

Last year, \$31.6 billion was given to the nation's universities and colleges, according to the Council for Aid to Education. MSU received about \$210.9 million in new gift commitments in 2007-08. But Bob Groves, MSU vice president for University Advancement, said he can already see the current economy having an effect on charitable giving to the university.

"We are seeing people reluctant to make new commitments," Groves said. "People that typically would be willing at this juncture to consider a new gift or commitment to a new building or start creating a new endowment, they're saying 'this isn't a good time for me to make that commitment.'"

Groves said he could not provide specific figures through the first few months of the year because University Advancement doesn't report numbers until the end of the fiscal year.

Groves said the uncertainty surrounding the economy has made some people wary of pledging money years into the future. Secondly, many donors who make large donations more

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NEWS BRIEF

PROFESSOR DIES OF HEART ATTACK

An MSU Department of Family & Child Ecology professor died Saturday of a heart attack, students were notified Sunday.

Tom Luster, professor of FCE 211, died while visiting family in Chicago, teaching assistant Emily Schmittel wrote to students of the course in an e-mail.

Schmittel wrote that class for Monday was cancelled and will resume Wednesday.

"I cannot say enough about how influential Dr. Luster was on those who knew him. He was not only a great professor and mentor who cared deeply about his students but also a great person," she wrote.

For more, check www.statenews.com or see the Tuesday edition of [The State News](http://www.statenews.com).

STAFF REPORT

FACULTY RIGHTS

A California court case could determine how far free speech goes for university faculty, page 3A

Weather
Partly Cloudy
High 58° | Low 36°
Three-day forecast, Page 2A

SPENDING

MSU receives \$1.4M in earmarks for research work

By Allison Bush
THE STATE NEWS

Several MSU research projects will receive more funding after President Barack Obama signed a controversial \$410 billion spending bill last week packed with billions of dollars in earmarks.

The bill includes several millions of dollars in funding for university projects, including \$1.4 million for the construction of a biofuel research center at MSU's Upper Peninsula Tree Improvement Center in Escanaba.

Earmarks are congressional provisions that require funds to be spent on specific projects.

often pet projects of individual legislators.

The research at the biofuel research center will focus on producing ethanol from trees, said Jamie DePolo, director of communications for the Michigan Agriculture Experiment Station, or MAES.

"Most of ethanol on the market is now made from corn grains," she said. "But Michigan has a lot of trees, and another way to make ethanol is to use cellulose from trees — it's just a little more difficult to break the cellulose down."

The money for this research will not offset Gov. Jennifer Gran-

holm's proposed cut in funding to MSU's Extension program and MAES, DePolo said. Granholm proposed combining the programs and cutting their funding in half, to \$32 million, in her recommended budget.

"This money is strictly for research, and if we didn't have the experiment station already located in Escanaba, I don't know that we would be able to get this money," DePolo said.

Experts also said it's unlikely any of the MSU earmarks will offset Granholm's proposed 3 percent cut to higher education.

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MSU earmarks

\$750,000 to the Consortium for Plant Biotechnology Research, including for research conducted at MSU

\$500,000 from a \$4.5 million grant for wood utilization research

\$346,000 to share with the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station for fire blight research

\$346,000 for research on the plant disease phytophthora

\$266,000 for sustainable agriculture research

\$246,000 for research on bovine tuberculosis

\$147,000 for research to develop dry beans resistant to white mold infection

\$104,000 for research on ammonia root rot

SOURCES: MSU, GANNETT NEWS SERVICE