

## Naymick returns to Michigan

Among the tens of thousands of MSU fans who flocked to Detroit this weekend for the Final Four, there were thousands of alumni and even a few connected with the MSU men's basketball program.

Drew Naymick, the Muskegon native and former MSU center, returned to Ford Field to support his former teammates after having spent five years with the Spartans.

"This is great," he said Saturday, while spending time at Elwood Bar & Grill near Ford Field, before the game. "This is an incredible atmosphere."

Naymick graduated last year in MSU's career leader in blocked shots with 134. He was an Academic All-Big Ten player and finished his career with the team while pursuing his doctorate degree in finance.

"I remember coach Izzo talking about this year when they first announced the Final Four would be here," Naymick said. "And these guys did it."

Naymick returned to Michigan after a one-year stint with the SKK Kotwica Kolobrzeg men's basketball team in Poland, where he posted 10.5 points, 7.5 rebounds and a league-high two blocks per game. His team finished third in its league and won the Polish Cup for the first time in three years.

Naymick said it was a little different coming back and watching the Spartans as an outsider instead of from his usual spot on the floor or from the sidelines.

"I enjoyed it as a player and now I'm enjoying it as a fan," he said, adding that he's keen to touch with a number of the current players. "I've talked to them a little, yeah," he said. "It's part of being in the Spartan family."

JOEY NOWAK

## Fans asked to wear white

The MSU Athletics Department is asking that Spartans fans attending tonight's national championship game against North Carolina at Ford Field wear white to the game.

The Spartans are the first team to play for a national championship in their home state since Duke lost to Arkansas 76-72 in Charlotte, N.C., in 1994 and will be looking to improve on the record 72,456 fans that attended Saturday's 82-73 victory over Connecticut.

This is MSU's first national championship game since winning the title in 2000, and will be a rematch of the Dec. 3, 2008 contest when the Spartans lost to North Carolina 98-63.

JOSEPH TERRY

ONLINE

Visit [statenews.com](http://statenews.com) at 9 p.m. tonight for our live blog of the title game

# SPORTS

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**HISTORY**  
The MSU men's basketball team will go for its third national title starting at 9:21 p.m. tonight against North Carolina at Ford Field in Detroit.

Monday

## IT ALL COMES DOWN TO THIS



North Carolina head coach Roy Williams responds to the MSU student section Dec. 3, 2008 at Ford Field in Detroit after being heckled about allegedly tanning.



MSU men's basketball head coach Tom Izzo screams at his team Nov. 16, 2008 during the game against Idaho at Breslin Center. The Spartans won 100-62.

## Spartans, Tar Heels to clash with 2009 national championship at stake

By Cash Kruth  
THE STATE NEWS

**D**etroit — One win would give North Carolina the 2009 national championship. It would also give its eight-man senior class — which includes Marcus Ginyard, Bobby Frasor, Danny Green and Tyler Hansbrough — 124 career wins, the most of any class in North Carolina history.

With tonight's NCAA national championship game against MSU at 9:21 p.m. at Ford Field quickly approaching, North Carolina players and coach Roy Williams said the seniors are slowly understanding they are preparing for their last game as Tar Heels.

"I'm sorry, there's no question about it," Williams said at his press conference Sunday. "I'm emotional. This senior class has been really, really important to me."

North Carolina's senior class came in after the Tar Heels won the 2005 national championship. After the title, the team was decimated by the early departures of juniors Raymond Felton, Sean May and Rashad McCants, as well as freshman, guard Ty Lawson

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By Alex Altman  
THE STATE NEWS

**D**etroit — When asked to compare his team to North Carolina, MSU men's basketball head coach Tom Izzo didn't sugarcoat his feelings. "If we play good and they play good, we're losing," Izzo said during a press conference Sunday at Ford Field. "That's the way I look at it."

Izzo didn't mean that in a negative way, and he wasn't trying to sandbag North Carolina, either. He was simply being a realist about his team's prospects against a North Carolina squad that could be confused for an NBA farm team.

Since the end of last season, when North Carolina stars forward Tyler Hansbrough, guard Ty Lawson

and guard Wayne Ellington decided to put the NBA on hold, the Tar Heels have been the decisive favorite to win the 2009 National Championship.

They entered the season as the No. 1 team in the country and, despite suffering some bruises during their Atlantic Coast Conference schedule, their reputation

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North Carolina's Ty Lawson reacts to a play against Villanova during a men's NCAA Final Four semifinal college basketball game Saturday in Detroit.

PAUL SANCT/AP



Sophomore Kalin Lucas celebrates during Saturday's NCAA Final Four game against Connecticut at Ford Field. Lucas led the Spartans with 21 points, helping MSU advance to the championship game with an 82-73 win.

KATIE GRANT/THE STATE NEWS

## Team effort leads MSU past UConn

By Cash Kruth  
THE STATE NEWS

**D**etroit — Sophomore guard Chris Allen made a layup to put the MSU men's basketball team up 53-49 and force Connecticut to call a timeout early in the second half of Saturday's national semifinal.

Sophomore guard Kalin Lucas struted over to the MSU bench, looked up at the 72,456 in attendance at Ford Field and yelled, "This is my house!"

Lucas scored 21 points and junior forward Raymar Morgan broke out of his tournament slump with 18 points and nine rebounds as the Spartans defeated UConn 82-73 to advance to today's NCAA national championship game against North Carolina, who defeated Villanova 83-69 later that night.

"I pulled Ray into the shower room before we had our team meeting to go out at the very end," MSU head coach Tom Izzo said. "I said, 'Raymar, just let the game come to you. Defend and rebound, because you can do that. We're going to let us win.' Today they're going to let us win."

"...I'm really happy for Raymar. As you can tell, I think the rest of the guys are, too."

Freshman guard Korie Lucious (11 points) provided a spark off the bench in the first half for the Spartans, while sophomore guard Durrell Summers (10 points) and freshman forward Raymond Green (eight points) did the same in the second half.

Hasheem Thabeet led the Huskies with 17 points. They ended their season at 31-5.

"I think in all honesty, and I truly, truly believe this, that they played differently," UConn head coach Jim Calhoun said of MSU. "We played Purdue. We played Michigan. We beat Wisconsin by 20. We've seen teams they played, we saw tapes of the games. And that's a different team. And they were different against Louisville. Special. They were close to a special team (Saturday)."

A jumper by Morgan and three free throws by UConn made the score 55-52, but Summers drilled a 3-pointer to put MSU up six. Green scored six straight points to put MSU up eight, then a jumper by senior center Goran Suton gave MSU the biggest lead of the game.

Thabeet made a hook shot to cut the lead to eight, but Summers followed with the play of the game to send the Ford Field crowd into a frenzy. After Morgan stripped UConn's Craig Austrie, he threw the ball out court to Summers. UConn's Robinson had position, but Summers slammed the ball hard through the rim to put MSU up by 10.

UConn kept fighting back, but a 3-pointer by Lucas and then transition slam by Morgan put MSU up 11, 71-60.

The Huskies slept to within three, 74-71, but Summers converted on a 3-point play with one minute remaining and the Spartans and MSU held on from the free throw line.

MSU's bench outscored UConn's 33-7, while the Spartans had 11 steals.