

The State News

DÉJÀ BLUE



By Cash Kruth
THE STATE NEWS

Detroit — Same two teams. Same venue. Same sad story for the MSU men's basketball team. Four months after thumping the Spartans by 35 points at Ford Field, North Carolina came back to the Motor City on Monday night and reaffirmed that it is the best team in the nation, as the Tar Heels throttled MSU 89-72 to claim the 2009 NCAA national championship.

"They played well and I guess I was disappointed," MSU head coach Tom Izzo said. "We turned it over early, we missed some shots early and we didn't check very well. They got off to that 24-7 lead and that's the way it stayed. We couldn't really dig into it."

Senior center Goran Suton led MSU with 17 points and 11 rebounds, while sophomore guard Kalin Lucas scored 14 points and seven assists. Sophomore guard Durrell Summers had 13 points for the Spartans, who finished with a record of 31-7.

The fifth national championship in North Carolina history solidified the decision of the Tar Heels'

group of Wayne Ellington, Danny Green, Tyler Hansbrough and Ty Lawson to hold off the NBA for one more season.

Lawson led North Carolina (34-4) with 21 points and six assists, along with a title game-record eight steals. Ellington, who was named the Final Four's Most Outstanding Player, had 19 points, while Hansbrough added 18.

"I thought about how hard we worked," Ellington said in a televised interview before a national audience after the game. "We've been working so hard since last year when we fell short. We wanted to redeem ourselves. I'm proud of all my teammates and my coaches. It feels great."

Recalling the Dec. 3 debacle, Izzo said earli-

er in the weekend that if the Spartans and Tar Heels both played "good," North Carolina would win by 20 points. Unfortunately for Izzo, the Spartans didn't even get to test his theory as the game was all but over in the first half.

By the time the under-16 minute media timeout was called, the Tar Heels had a 10-point lead, 17-7, thanks in part to five MSU turnovers and North Carolina making six of its first seven shots. A Hansbrough learner in the lane midway through the first half put North Carolina up by 20. When the two teams headed into the locker room at halftime, North Carolina had sprinted out to a 55-34 lead, setting NCAA title game

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