

Marquise Gray leads MSU to 66-45 victory over Northwestern

Spartan sophomore comes off bench, lifts team

By Ernie Boone

EAST LANSING, MI -- Marquise Gray showed up at the Breslin Center again Wednesday, January 10, and Spartan fans are hoping that this time he's here for good.

The 6-8 235-pound red-shirt sophomore shook off the doldrums of a pair of sub par Big 10 opening week performances to lead MSU to a 66-45 victory over Northwestern in its conference home opener.

Gray came off the bench, stepped in front of a Craig Moore passed, dribbled the floor and threw down a thundering dunk at 15:35 in the first period to start the Spartans on a 9-0 run that erased a 5-0 Northwestern lead.

The Spartans never looked

back.

Head coach Tom Izzo had scratched Gray from the starting line-up in favor of 6-11 Idong Ibok.

Gray responded with a 16 point, five rebound effort, going a perfect seven for seven from the field and two for two from the free throw line.

"I think it was his way of telling me that I have to step up," Gray said after the game. "I was a little mad, but I tried to use it to make me play harder. Tone (former MSU captain Antonio Smith) told me I needed to step it up."

The former Spartan captain has filled in on the scout team at some recent practices and has taken Gray, a Flint product, under his wing.

Smith was Izzo's first recruit and the original "Flint Stone,"



MARQUISE GRAY

the name given to a group of former Spartans who hail from Flint. Included in the "Flint Stones," are Mateen

Cleaves, Morris Peterson and Charlie Bell.

"I talk to Tone almost every day," Gray said.

Izzo has also been talking to Gray encouraging him to play harder and to stay focused, especially on defense.

"We talked a lot the last few days," Izzo said. "Marquise played better (tonight). He's making steps in the right direction."

Gray has had demonstrated that he can play hard and with focus.

"When does," said Izzo, "He's a very good player.

Izzo is confident that Gray will be able to help MSU develop into a good team, one that will compete effectively in the conference and qualify for the NCAA tournament.

To do that, the Gray who showed up at Breslin against

Northwestern must take up permanent residence.

There can be no more disappearing acts such as that which occurred during the opening week of the Big Ten campaign when he totaled 13 points and 10 rebounds in losses to Iowa, 62-60, and Indiana, 73-51.

Despite a solid performance against the Wildcats, both Izzo and Gray are hesitant to declare the perfect night a turning point.

The jury is still out. Izzo and Spartan fans must wait to see if the recent progress is an indication that Gray has grown up or merely an indication that he is gradually maturing.

Fans must remember, Gray has yet to complete a full season of Big 10 action.

Fans invited to attend Spartan Football Signing Day 2007

Join MSU head coach Mark Dantonio and his coaching staff at the Breslin Center on Wednesday, Feb. 7 as the 2007 recruiting class is announced.

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Michigan State football fans are invited to join first-year head coach Mark Dantonio and his coaching staff for Spartan Football Signing Day 2007 on Wednesday, Feb. 7 at the Breslin Center. Admission is free and doors open at 5:30 p.m. as a 60-minute autograph session, featuring members of the 2007 Spartan football team, kicks off the activities from the concourse.

A complimentary schedule poster will be provided for autographs.

The Spartan Brass as well as the MSU cheerleaders and dance team will entertain the crowd prior to the formal program. At 7:15 p.m., Coach Dantonio will introduce the 2007 recruiting class via video highlights.

Following the introduction of the recruiting class, fans are invited to remain in the arena and watch the men's basketball game at Purdue on the video boards. Tip-off is set for 8 p.m.

Concession stands will be open throughout the

evening's program.

The MSU Athletics Department has worked in conjunction with the MSU Downtown Coaches Club, MSU Football Players Association and MSU Alumni Association in planning this special event.

"This promises to be an exciting event, and this is a special way to build some momentum toward the 2007 season," Coach Dantonio said.

Spartan Football Signing Day 2007 – Itinerary

5:30 p.m.: Doors Open
5:30-6:30 p.m.: Autograph

Session (concourse)
6:45-7 p.m.: Spartan Brass / MSU Cheerleaders/MSU Dance Team
7 p.m.: Introductions (head coach Mark Dantonio and his coaching staff)
7:15 p.m.: Mark Dantonio – Video Introduction of 2007 Recruiting Class
8 p.m.: Video Boards – MSU Men's Basketball Game at Purdue

www.mibulletin.org



Currently accepting applications for FUNERAL SERVICE DRIVERS
Must be available Monday through Saturday
Early mornings until late afternoons
Must have:
Excellent Driving Record,
Superior Customer Service Skills,
and Flexible Schedule
Please come in for application
No Phone Calls Please

Former Spartans prepare for NFL Playoffs

EAST LANSING, MI. – Five former Michigan State players helped their teams reach the wild card phase of this season's NFL playoff, and just one, Seattle linebacker Julian Peterson, survived to join the three additional Spartans on teams with first round byes.

Dallas offensive tackle, Flozell Adams, Peterson, New York Jets tight end, Chris Baker and safety Eric Smith, and New York Giants wide receiver Plaxico Burress, engaged in wild card action. San Diego defensive tackle, Brandon McKinney, Baltimore wide receiver, Derrick Mason, and Chicago wide redeiver, Muhsin Muhammad are set to join the fray in second round action.

Next weekend, three more former Spartans will begin postseason play as San Diego, Baltimore and Chicago host the Divisional Playoffs.

The 6-foot-7, 340-pound Adams started all 16 regular-season games at left tackle for the Cowboys, who finished sixth in the NFC in rushing while averaging 121.0 yards per game. Dallas running back Julius Jones ranked 10th in the NFC with 1,084 rushing yards.

The 6-3, 235-pound Peterson, who started all 16 regular-season games for Seattle, ranked seventh in the NFC in sacks, with a career best 10 for 89 yards. He also finished fourth on the team in tackles, with 89 including 71 solo stops. Peterson posted double-figure tackles in back-to-back games in late October, with 12 stops against Minnesota (2 sacks) and 10 at Kansas City. He will make his third Pro Bowl appearance on Feb. 10.

The 6-3, 258-pound Baker started 14 of 16 regular-season games for the Jets. He finished third on the team in receptions, with a career best 31 for 300 yards (9.7 avg.). His four touchdown catches also matched a career high. Baker had four receptions each at Minnesota (33 yards), at Green Bay (50), against Miami (39) and at Tennessee (34).

The 6-1, 209-pound Smith appeared in all but one regular-season game as a rookie with the Jets. He recorded 27 tackles (19 solos, 8 assists) and two interceptions in 2006. Smith produced a career-best seven tackles against Houston, including six solo hits. He intercepted one pass each against Oakland and at Cleveland.

The 6-5, 232-pound Burress started 15 games during the regular season for the Giants and his 10 TD receptions tied for second in the NFC. He led the team in receiving yards (988) and ranked second in receptions (63). Burress recorded two 100-yard receiving games in 2006, with both coming against Philadelphia (6 catches for 120 yards on Dec. 17 and 6 grabs for 114 yards on Sept. 17).

The 6-2, 324-pound McKinney saw action in six games in November and December as a rookie with San Diego. He had two solo tackles and a pass break-up in the regular-season finale against Arizona.

The 5-10, 192-pound Mason started 15 of 16 regular-season games for the Ravens. He finished seventh on the team in receptions (68) and third in receiving yards (750). Mason caught seven passes each at Cincinnati (90 yards) and at Cleveland (season high 132).

The 6-2, 215-pound Muhammad started all 16 regular-season games for Chicago and led the team in receptions (60) and receiving yards (863). He posted three 100-yard receiving games in 2006, including a season-best 123 yards on seven catches at the New York Giants. Muhammad had a season-high nine receptions for 118 yards at Minnesota. He caught six passes for 102 yards at Green Bay.

Celebration Announcements
By Mr. Party,
The Ambassador of Celebration

Birthdays in December and January

- Mr. Larry J. Ford celebrated his birthday on December 6th, 2006.
- Mr. Amos Townsend celebrated his 55th birthday on December 7th, 2006 with family and friends at Fire Mountain Restaurant in Lansing, MI.
- Mr. Marc A Cambric celebrated his birthday on December 8th 2006 with friends and company.
- Ms. Karen Clarke celebrated her birthday on December 16th, 2006.
- Ms. Laurie Bush celebrated her 42nd birthday on January 2nd, 2007 with family and friends.
- Ms. Chari Johnson celebrated 41st birthday on January 2nd, 2007 with a limousine ride with family and friends to the Holiday Lanes to bowl, The Cadillac Club for dinner, Roxy's Night Club for dancing and a suite at the Best Western Hotel in Lansing, MI.
- Ms. Lola Martinez celebrated her birthday on January 4th, 2007 with friends Leslie and neighbor for a great birthday.
- Ms. Breanna Brown celebrated her birthday on January 5th, 2007.
- Ms. Contisha Salinas celebrated her 28th birthday on January 5th, 2007.
- Mr. Dip J D Johnson celebrated his birthday on January 6th, 2007 at Cheetah's of Lansing
- Ms. Jessica Robinson celebrated her 21st birthday on January 6th, 2007. She partied hard!
- Mr. Christopher Wimberly celebrated his 13th birthday on January 6, 2007.
- Ms. Arianna Loudon celebrated her 6th birthday on January 6th, 2007.
- Ms. S'heree' Shiver celebrated her birthday on January 6th, 2007 with friends and family at Colonial Bar & Grill in Lansing, MI.
- Ms. Brandi Day celebrated her 22st birthday on January 7th, 2007 with Jess, Lindsay, Court, Mel, Shawn, Gonzo, Kristi, Matt, Laura, Mom, Joan, Ashley, Charla, Chrish, Jeremy and Mr. Party at Rum Runners Piano Bar in Lansing,
- Mr. Marion Shipman celebrated his 90th birthday on January 8th, 2007 with family and friends.
- Ms. Julie Lundberg celebrated her 26th birthday on January 11th, 2007 with friends at the Dollar Night Club in Lansing, MI.
- Mrs. Coral Brown will celebrate her birthday on January 12th, 2007.
- Mr. Cornelius Lewis will celebrate his birthday on January 13th, 2007.
- Ms. Beverly Lewis will celebrate her birthday on January 14th, 2007.
- Mrs. Pennie Wade will celebrate her 94th birthday on January 17th, 2007.
- Mr. Gregory A. Eaton will celebrate his birthday on January 17th, 2007.
- Mr. Paul A. Tyler will celebrate his 40th birthday on January 21st, 2007.
- Ms. Christina Deleon AKA "Beanie" will celebrate her 21st birthday on January 21st, 2007 with Ms. "Capitol City" and Jeanie.
- Ms. Naomi Reed will celebrate her 94th birthday on January 22nd, 2007.
- Mrs. Mattie Morris will celebrate her birthday on January 22nd, 2007 with family and friends.
- Mrs. Jayme A. King will celebrate her 29th birthday on January 22nd, 2007.
- Ms. Emma Swinton will celebrate her birthday on January 22nd, 2007.
- Mr. Marshawn Blake will celebrate on January 24th 2007.
- Ms. Khlorse Walton AKA "Koko" will celebrate 28th birthday on January 25th, 2007.
- Mr. David Cole will celebrate his birthday on January 27th, 2007, by performing with The (Motown Sound) Power Light Band, as family and friends get down at Auggies Pub & Grill in Lansing, MI.
- Ms. Alethia Thomas will celebrate her birthday on January 30th, 2007.
- Ms. Laura Warr will celebrate her birthday on January 31st, 2007.

Congratulations
Ms. Chantelle Brandin on her new baby Celea Willis born (5lbs 12oz) on December 6th, 2006. From Aunt Alephia and Jemonica Thomas.
Mr. Shain (Bubba) Shannon received a new job promotion on January 2, 2007, at AAI Heat Treatment Plant in Lansing, MI.
Please send us the information about you, your family or friends celebrating the Events of Life, by email: mrpartycserv@aol.com, or call our office at 1-517-482-9782.

Support the Michigan Bulletin YOUR community newspaper