

# Rough and tumble schedule prepares MSU for Big Ten battles

By Ernie Boone

EAST LANSING Mich. - In basketball, it matters not if you win or lose, but how you play the game - in December that is!

that better than Michigan State's Tom Izzo. The Spartan mentor takes on all comers in the early going, often losing to outstanding teams in an effort to toughen his players, iron out team kinks and prepare for the conference

wars and the NCAA Tournament run.

This season is no exception as the Spartans prepare for a Saturday, December 19 visit to Breslin Center by Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne and a December 22 trip to Austin to battle second ranked Texas.

Izzo's Spartans, who entered the season ranked second, have already dropped out of the top 10 in both polls having suffered a pair of losses to post an 8-2 record for a no. 12 spot in the polls.

Izzo, however, appears unconcerned about the descent as he focuses on settling into a starting line-up and player rotation that MSU can live with in the upcoming Big Ten campaign.

"The biggest key for me (as far as determining a rotation) is what I do with Dramond Green," Izzo said at his weekly press conference. "I say that. Like a Morris Peterson, I think he could be the best sixth man in basketball. I think he could start for sure for us, especially the way he's playing right now, but if you look at our rotations and when you look at what he have coming off

## Jones tapped AP First-Team All-American

Michigan State junior linebacker and 2009 Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year Greg Jones has been named First-Team All-American by The Associated Press. The 6-foot-1, 228-pound Jones leads the Big Ten and ranks third in the NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision with 141 tackles, the eighth-best single-season total in MSU history. He is the only Big Ten player listed on the first team.

It marks the second-straight year that a Spartan has earned a spot on the AP All-America First Team, as Jones joins running back Javon Ringer (2008).



**Dramond Green**

the bench and what we need, if I was to go tomorrow I would still bring him off the bench at the 17 minute mark and he just goes in for whoever."

Wing men Korie Lucious, Durrell Summers and Chris Allen will be seven and eight off the bench depending upon who starts and what's needed.

All three have started games this season and all three have seen significant minutes off the bench.

Green and Raymar Morgan have been the glue according to Izzo. Green is rapidly developing into a vocal leader on the court and in the locker room in addition to being a leader on the stat sheets.

Green leads the team in rebounding, 84. per game, ranks second in scoring, 11.4, and third in assists with 25.

He got the start at power forward against Oakland and helped the Spartans to what Izzo called their best performance of the season as the topped the Grizzlies 88-57.

Green got off to a fast start, hitting his first eight shots as MSU took a commanding 44-21 halftime lead and never looked back.

He finished with 19 points and 12 rebounds, both career highs. Kalin Lucas also had 19 points and Delvon Roe 11 points. Oakland's 6-11 Keith Benson led all scorers with 21 points. Okemos grad, Johnathon Jones added 9 points, two assists and 4 rebounds.

MSU is favored to beat IPFW, but will be a solid underdog against Texas.

The Longhorns are 8-0 and will be coming off a Saturday, Dec. 19 game against North Carolina. They'll either be brimming with confidence following an impressive victory or smarting from a tough to take loss.

Either way, the Spartans can expect to run into a hornet's nest in Austin. But win or lose, it's December, and what will be most important is how MSU plays that game.

## DeHaan leads Lady Spartans to victory over top teams

EAST LANSING, Mich. - Michigan State women's basketball senior Allyssa DeHaan was selected as the Big Ten Conference's Player of the Week, as announced by the league office on Monday, Dec. 14. DeHaan led the Spartans (7-3) to a pair of wins over No. 8 Xavier, 66-53, and Florida Gulf Coast, 94-71. She is the first Spartan to be honored this season and earns the weekly conference honor for an MSU record seventh time in her career.

DeHaan posted her first double-double of the season and 16th of her career, leading MSU to its second top-10 upset of the season, knocking off No. 8 Xavier on Wednesday. MSU toppled fourth ranked North Carolina, 72-66, earlier in the year. DeHaan scored a game-high 22 points against Xavier, going 8-of-10 from the field and 6-of-6 from the

line, while also adding a season-high 13 rebounds and five blocks in 31 minutes. The Spartans improved to 36-6 when DeHaan scores in double-figures in her career.

On Sunday, DeHaan set the tone early, scoring 11 points, including her first 3-pointer of the season, and grabbing six boards in first half, as the Spartans jumped out to a 57-27 lead at the half. She played only five minutes in the second half, and finished with three blocks.

This week, DeHaan moved into fourth place on the NCAA Division I career blocked shots list with 440. She is now 41 blocks away from surpassing Sandora Irvin for the NCAA record. Also, she jumped into seventh place on the MSU all-time points list with 1,426, and remains seventh in career rebounds with 795.

## MSU set to play Alamo Bowl

EAST LANSING, Mich. - Michigan State (6-6, 4-4 Big Ten) has accepted an invitation to play Texas Tech (8-4, 5-3 Big 12) in the 17th annual Valero Alamo Bowl on Saturday, Jan. 2, 2010, in San Antonio, Texas. The Valero Alamo Bowl will be televised nationally by ESPN with kickoff set for 9 p.m. EST.

"The Valero Alamo Bowl has a well-deserved reputation for high scoring, competitive games that go down to the wire and deliver top ESPN ratings," Valero Alamo Bowl Chairman Gene Dawson said. "This year's game should be no different as Texas Tech and Michigan State each average 30-plus points and over 400 yards of offense per game."

Michigan State is making its third-straight postseason bowl appearance for the first time since 1995-97, matching the second-longest bowl streak in school history. The Spartans made a school-record four straight postseason bowl appearances under George Perles in the late 1980s.

## Jones named AFCA First-Team All-American

EAST LANSING, Mich. - Michigan State junior linebacker and 2009 Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year Greg Jones has been named First-Team All-American by the American Football Coaches Association. The 6-foot-1, 228-pound Jones leads the Big Ten and ranks third in the NCAA Football Bowl Subdivision with 141 tackles, the eighth-best single-season total in MSU history. He becomes the first Spartan to earn AFCA All-America honors since wide receiver Charles Rogers in 2002.

The AFCA has selected an All-America team since 1945. Jones ranks fourth in the NCAA FBS in tackles per game (11.8), tied for 22nd in sacks (0.75 per game) and tied for 43rd in tackles for loss (1.13 per game). He also is listed among the Big Ten leaders in sacks (fourth) and tackles for loss (tied for eighth at 1.12 per game). Jones leads the team in



**Greg Jones (53)**

tackles (141 total), tackles for loss (13.5 for 68 yards), sacks (9.0 for 53 yards) and production points (282). He became the first Spartan to record back-to-back 100-tackle seasons since 2003-04 when both linebacker Ronald Stanley and free safety Jason Harmon reached the milestone.

Jones reached double-figure tackles for the eighth time this season in MSU's regular-season finale against No. 13 Penn State, matching his career high with 15 tackles. He recorded 2.5 tackles for

loss (11 yards) against the Nittany Lions, including 1.5 sacks (6 yards).

He also posted double-digit tackles against Montana State (14), Central Michigan (15), Wisconsin (14), Illinois (11), Northwestern (14), Iowa (12) and Minnesota (12). Jones produced a career-best two sacks (9 yards) in MSU's 24-14 Homecoming victory over Northwestern.

"With his consistent productivity, Greg Jones has a tremendous impact in every game," MSU head coach Mark Dantonio said. "He's an outstanding tackler, who is certainly deserving of this honor. Greg has dedicated himself to becoming a complete football player and that includes his willingness to spend additional time studying video. This is really Greg's first full season playing at middle linebacker, so he will continue to grow in the position as we move forward."

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