

Kalin Lucas' leadership sparks the Spartan attack

By Ernie Boone
 EAST LANSING – During the summer Kalin Lucas added a tattoo. It reads "Attack or be killed."
 It was meant to remind him that as the point guard on a team with ambitions to return to the Final Four and claim a national championship he must be aggressive on offense and attack opponents or opponents will defeat those ambitions and dash hopes.
 Against Illinois Saturday, January 16, he forgot that attack mantra – for almost a half.
 But a little more than six minutes before intermission, after a two minute stint next to coach Tom Izzo on the Spartan bench, he remembered and led MSU to a

73-63 victory to move into sole possession of first place in the Big Ten championship race.
 The loss was the first in the conference for the Illini who now trail the 5-0 Spartans by one game at 4-1.
 Until his awakening, Illinois had effectively taken Lucas out of the game, limiting him to one point. "I hadn't been playing well and I knew that I had to be more aggressive," Lucas said. "I'm the head, and if you cut off the head, the body will die. I knew I had to step it up."
 He stepped it up by going on the attack.
 He began by penetrating the paint and kicking out to Korie Lucious who nailed a three to cut the lead to 24-21. He then

followed an Illini turnover with a short jumper, his only first half field goal. And he finished with a pair of free throws to help MSU erase a 24-18 deficit and take a 36-29 halftime lead.
 He became even more aggressive in the second half as MSU held the Illini scoreless the first four minutes to pull ahead, 43-29. Lucas finished with 20 points and four assists. He got plenty of help as Delvon Roe had 15 points and four rebounds, and Raymar Morgan posted a double-double with 14 points and 10 rebounds. Illinois was led by Demetri McCamey with 15 points, Tyler Griffey, 12 and Mike Davis, 11. Mike Tisdale, the Illini's 7-1 center, who had been averaging more than 20 points in Big Ten

play, was hampered by foul trouble. He played only 19 minutes and tallied just two points.
 It was the second victory over a conference contender during the week. On January 14 MSU defeated Minnesota, 60-53, at Breslin.
 MSU will play Iowa in its third straight home contest at 6:30 Wednesday, January 20.
 Lucas also led the Spartan attack against Minnesota, scoring 14 points in a contest marked by suffocating defense by both teams. Durrell Summers was the only other MSU player in double figures with 13 points and eight rebounds.
 One of four Spartan captains, Lucas is under consistent pressure from Izzo to improve his performance as a leader. While he has struggled to fulfill that role to Izzo's satisfaction, Lucas has accepted the challenge

and he is clearly growing into the role.
 Izzo is quick to point out that Lucas is making steady progress in the leadership area. Izzo just wants to speed up that process. He noted that when he sat Lucas down and expressed concern about his play, Lucas agreed he hadn't been playing well and resolved to step it up.
 Izzo likes it when players accept responsibility, hold each other accountable, work to improve and work to help their teammates improve.
 He feels that a player coached team, that is a team with players who recognize what's happening on the court, understand game situations and what's needed to be successful, and speak up in the huddle, is better than a team that depends totally on its coaching staff.
 Lucas and his Spartan teammates are moving in that direction.

All-American linebacker Greg Jones passes on NFL draft, coach Dantonio welcomes back eight suspended players

By Ernie Boone
 EAST LANSING – Michigan State's football team got some mighty good news this week as All-American linebacker, Greg Jones announced his decision to pass up the NFL draft and return for his senior season, and seven players suspended for their involvement in an incident at a fraternity pot luck held at Rather Hall following the Spartans' awards banquet last semester were welcomed back to the team.
 Jones, the reigning Big Ten Co-Defensive Player of the Year, decided to pass up the NFL to help MSU attempt to contend for a Big Ten championship.

about some things...I do feel like this team can try to compete for the championship."
 As a junior, this season, Jones was involved in 154 tackles. A consensus All-American, Jones was named the nation's best linebacker by College Football News.
 The eight suspended players include starters B.J. Cunningham, Mark Dell and Chris L. Rucker. Others returning are Fred Smith, J'Michael Deane, Donald Spencer, and Chris D. Rucker. Myles White, who was

suspended for an unrelated violation of team rules (he had been charged with public urination), was also welcomed back.
 The actions seem to settle things for Spartan football program, paving the way for the completion of what is expected to be a successful recruiting season (signing day is just two weeks away), and preparation for winter conditioning.
 Head coach Mark Dantonio praised this season's Spartans for their resilience.

"I always felt like I was kind of leaning toward coming back," said Jones. "I kind of just wanted to make an educated decision

Lady Spartans fall out of Big Ten race

EAST LANSING – Michigan State's women fell completely out of the Big Ten championship race here January 14, suffering their fourth conference loss, 48-45, at the hands of a stubborn Wisconsin unit.
 The Spartans frittered away a 14-point lead to fall to 2-4 in the conference and 11-6 overall.
 They'll have to find a way to eliminate those costly scoring droughts and defensive lapses that allow teams to storm from behind snatch victories from the jaws of apparent defeats.

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