

# The MSU men's basketball team fights its way back into the Final Four

By Ernie Boone

Despite claiming a share of its second straight Big Ten Championship, the ability of Michigan State University's men's basketball team has been consistently questioned. The Spartans were plagued this season by what head coach, Tom Izzo called a lack of leadership, chemistry and other intangibles needed for greatness.

Faced with the new realities of the Internet, talk radio and a more aggressive professional media, Izzo was forced to make his usual disciplinary actions much more public. The result seemed to be inconsistent play on the part of key players, an early exit from the Big Ten Tournament, and a disappointing five seed in the tough Midwest Region of the NCAA tournament.

Experts gave the Spartans little or no chance to make a repeat trip to the Final Four and most predicted a pretty early departure some as early as the first round.

The Spartans were picked by many as the upper seed most likely to suffer a first round upset. MSU's chances

were further damaged by early round injuries to starters Kalin Lucas, Chris Allen and Delvon Roe.

Lucas was lost for the remainder of the season when he ruptured his left Achilles tendon late in the first half against Maryland. Allen injured a foot in the first round victory over New Mexico State which limited his time to 4 minutes against Maryland and hampered his performance against Northern Iowa and Tennessee.

But the Spartan players failed to get the memo, and paced by junior guard, Durrell Summers, Izzo's crew fought its way into the Final Four with victories over New Mexico State, Maryland, Northern Iowa and Tennessee.

Summers averaged 20 points and 4.5 rebounds in the four games to earn Most Outstanding Player honors in the regional. He was the second straight Spartan to do so. Goron Sutton won the honor in 2009. Here's how it went:

**The Early Rounds**  
**SPOKANE-** MSU opened NCAA Tournament play here



**Durrell Summers**

with victories over a trash talking New Mexico State team, 70-67, and a rugged Maryland crew, 85-83, then headed back to the NCAA Championship Tournament's Sweet 16 to make its third straight appearance - the ninth in 13 years.

They did it on the strength of one of the sweetest shots in Spartan basketball history. Sophomore point guard, Korie Lucious, filling in for the injured Kalin Lucas, faked right, stepped left and nailed a jumper from the top of the key at the buzzer to give the Spartans the victory at Veterans Arena.

The shot ended what can only be described as a war. The lead changed hands only six



**Raymar Morgan**

times, but four of those changes came in the last 40 seconds, ending with the Lucious beauty.

Paced by Summers, MSU grabbed a 48-39 halftime lead. They extended it to 16 with 12 minutes left in the second period before Maryland turned things around. Taking advantage of Lucas' absence, Maryland chipped away at the Spartan lead until.

**How sweet it is!**  
**ST. LOUIS** -The halftime box said it all. Morgan 0 points, 1 rebound; Green 2 points, 1 rebound. Northern Iowa held a 16-10 rebounding edge and a 29-22 lead on the scoreboard.

Tom Izzo took his two veterans aside and said to them that there were two guys MSU needed to play well in order to win the game. One of them was 0 for 1, and one of them was 0 for 3. One had 1 rebound and the other had 1 rebound. "If this continues," Izzo said, "We're not going to win."

That was enough. Faced with having his last collegiate game being a miserable performance in a devastating loss, Morgan hit the floor after the intermission with renewed determination, and Green, remembering those long, hot, and sweaty summer sessions spent working out and dreaming of making a national title run forgot about the frustration and



**Korie Lucious**

physicality of the first half and went to work.

The rest of the Spartans also understood what was needed, and began pounding the ball inside and fought their way to a 59-52 victory over the Panthers in the NCAA Midwest Regional semifinals.

"It was just a team effort," said junior guard Durrell Summers. "Delvon, he came out with a big dunk, and that kind of got us going. We realized we had to get the ball inside, just because we were taking a couple of ill-advised outside shots. And when you want to start off the second half with a good run, you want to go for high percentage shots."

They did, and the Spartans erased a seven point deficit with a 16-5 run in the first six minutes to take a 38-34 lead. It was nip and tuck the rest of the way with the Panthers knotting the score, 51-51, on a pair of Adam Koch free throws with 2:51 remaining. MSU then outscored Northern Iowa 8-1 to wrap up the contest and claim a spot in the Elite Eight.

Durrell Summers led all scorers with 19 points, followed by Korie Lucious with 10. Green added 8 and Morgan 7, but their biggest impact was on the backboards where they helped MSU go from a 16 to 10 halftime deficit to a 32 to 26 advantage and on defense

where they limited Panther big men, Adam Koch and Jordan Eglseider to 4 and 3 points respectively after the intermission.

Summers led the way rebounding also, grabbing seven, while Delvon Roe and Green had 5 each and Morgan grabbed three.

Koch scored 13 and Ahelegbe Kwadzo 12 to lead Northern Iowa. Ali Farokhmanesh, whose 3-point shooting sparked the Panther's upset Victory over top seeded Kansas, was limited to 9 points, going 2 for 9 from the floor, 1 of 6 from beyond the arc.

**The Elite Eight**  
 In the doorway to the Final Four stood a tall, talented Tennessee squad Sunday, March 28. The Volunteers, seeded 6 with regular season victories over I seeds Kansas and Kentucky, and fresh from a Friday night win over 2 seeded, Ohio State, were expected to finally burst the bubble of a very lucky group of wounded Spartans who had edged three opponents all of whom should have beaten them.

But once again, MSU players didn't get the memo and fought their way to victory. And again it came as a result of last second heroics. This time it was Morgan. Tennessee hit its first six shots, four 3-pointers, a lay-up and a dunk in the first five minutes, but couldn't build a significant lead as MSU kept pace with offensive rebounds, short jump shots and a pair of Summers 3-pointers. It was tied at 16 with 14:49 left. It see-sawed back and forth until halftime when Tennessee led 41-39.

Summers and Tennessee's 6-9 senior forward, Wayne Chism, led the scoring duel, each tallying 10 points. The second half wasn't much

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## The J.W. Sexton High School boys basketball team discovers runner-up can be a "good" hurting thing

It hurts, but it hurts so good! J.W. Sexton basketball players, coaches and fans were hurting Saturday, March 27. The Big Reds had just fallen short of their goal and there was little consolation. No basketball team likes to lose by 24 points in a game, especially when that game is for the Michigan high school class B state championship.

But beneath the hurt lies the joy of a wonderful state tournament run that saw a group of teenagers bring a school and community

together for a few weeks. "They may not think it's so great now," said a fan as he filed out of the Breslin Center. "But wait a little while until what they accomplished sinks in. Then they'll remember how great it felt when they won in the regional finals, the quarterfinals and the semifinals at Breslin."

It was Detroit Country Day's Ray McCallum Jr. that put the hurt on the Big Reds, scoring 32 points grabbing eight rebounds and recording seven steals as the

Yellowjackets walloped Sexton, 71-47.

Sexton was led by sophomore Denzel Valentine with 14 points, followed by James Suttles with seven. Amir Williams and Kenny Knight scored 12 and 10 points respectively for Country Day.

It was Sexton's first state finals appearance since the Brian Ferguson, Otis Davis crew won the class A title in 1960 and the first time Sexton reached the semifinals since the Charles Ford led team did it in 1972.

## TOWN HALL MEETING

Community organizations, groups and interested people come help organize a **TOWN HALL MEETING**

concerning the growing violence in the Lansing Black community.

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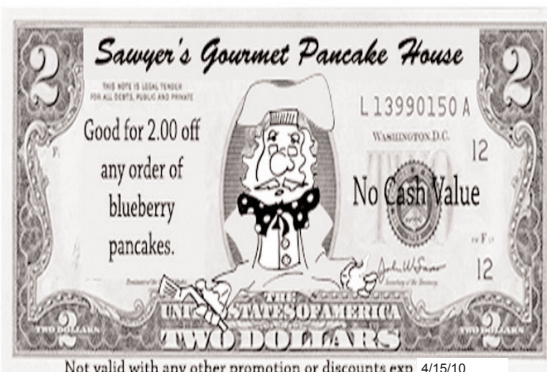
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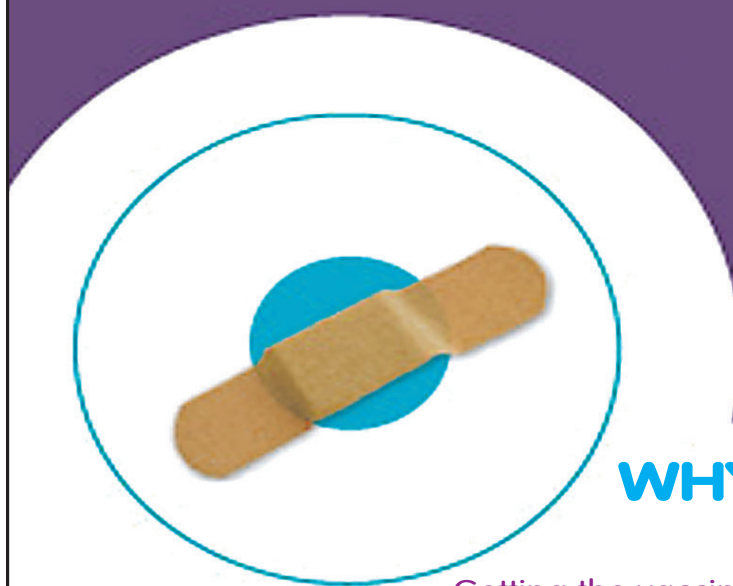
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## You can get vaccinated against H1N1 flu for free.



**WHY WOULDN'T YOU?**

Getting the vaccine is safe, easy and free through the Ingham County Health Department. It's open to anyone 6 months of age or older. You do not have to be a resident of Ingham County.

### APRIL-MAY CLINIC LOCATIONS

Getting the vaccine is safe, easy and free!

**APRIL 1**  
 Men's Health Day/ Ingham County Health Dept.  
 5303 South Cedar Street  
 Lansing  
 11am - 4pm

**APRIL 5**  
 Capital Area MI Works  
 2110 South Cedar  
 Lansing  
 2pm - 4:30pm

**APRIL 9**  
 Summerplace Townhomes  
 4901 S. Waverly  
 Lansing  
 12pm - 4pm

**APRIL 10**  
 Lansing Center Senior Living Expo  
 333 East Lansing Avenue  
 Lansing  
 9am - 6pm

**Cristo Rey Community Center**  
 1717 N. High Street  
 Lansing  
 11am - 3pm

**APRIL 12**  
 Village of Dansville Community Hall  
 1362 Mason Street  
 Dansville  
 5pm - 7pm

**APRIL 16**  
 St. Vincent Catholic Charities  
 1202 W. West Willow  
 Lansing  
 10am - 2pm

**APRIL 20**  
 Allen Neighborhood Center  
 1619 East Kalamazoo Street  
 Lansing  
 2pm - 8pm

**APRIL 23**  
 CATA Health Fair  
 420 S. Grand River  
 Lansing  
 10am - 1pm

**APRIL 24**  
 Dino's Barber Shop  
 4413 S. Cedar Street  
 Lansing  
 11am - 4pm

**APRIL 30**  
 South Side Community Coalition  
 2101 W. Holmes Rd.  
 Lansing  
 5pm - 7pm

**MAY 26**  
 Allen Neighborhood Center  
 1619 East Kalamazoo Street  
 Lansing  
 2:30pm - 7pm

**MAY 29**  
 Cristo Rey Church  
 201 West Miller  
 Lansing  
 1pm - 5pm

To find out more about your free H1N1 flu vaccination go to [StopFluMi.com](http://StopFluMi.com) or Call 211.

