

# 2010-11 Big Ten men's basketball previews: Michigan State (premium)

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*HawkeyeDrive.com*

The Big Ten kicks off its 2010-11 men's college basketball season next week, so this week, *HawkeyeDrive.com* will give you rundowns on all 11 conference teams. Today, we'll showcase [Indiana](#) and Michigan State. The Spartans come into this season ranked second nationally and will play Iowa twice this season – Feb. 2 at Carver-Hawkeye Arena and March 2 at the Breslin Center in East Lansing, Mich.

If there was any question before now whether Michigan State was the best team in the Big Ten coming into this 2010-11 season, the doubt evaporated as soon as Purdue announced Robbie Hummel would miss all of this year with another torn ACL.

Not only are the Spartans my pick to win the Big Ten this season, but I also think the No. 2 ranking they got from the AP poll is justifiable and it now sets up the possibility of a 1 vs. 2 when Michigan State plays top-ranked and defending national champion Duke on Dec. 1 as part of the Big Ten/ACC Challenge.

Coming off two straight Final Four appearances and having five key figures from last year's team returning, this might be as good a team Tom Izzo has had at Michigan State as the squads during the 1998-2001 seasons that reeled off three straight Final Fours and a national championship in 2000.

Headlining the returning players is senior Kalin Lucas, who

was chosen last week as the preseason Big Ten Player of the Year. The 6-1 point guard led the Spartans in both scoring with 14.8 points per game and in assists with 131 of them last season and was second on the team with 40 steals. Even more important for Michigan State is that Lucas comes back after injuries to both his ankle during Big Ten play and a torn Achilles' tendon during the NCAA Tournament.

Lucas' presence on the court is such that if he avoids serious injury, Michigan State is a threat to win night in and night out. His play is that critical to this team's success.

His counterpart in the Spartan backcourt is 6-5 guard Durell Summers, who is also a senior this year. Summers returns as Michigan State's second-leading scorer behind Lucas after averaging 11.3 points per contest last season. He started 24 of the Spartans' 37 games from a year ago. During the team's Final Four run last spring, Summers led the way with Lucas out, averaging 18.8 points per game during the NCAA Tournament.

Last season, Draymond Green only started three games for the Spartans, but had as big of an impact as anybody on the team. Now a junior, Green will be starting for Michigan State after a breakout sophomore campaign. The 6-6 forward led the Spartans in rebounding last year with 7.7 boards per contest, and his 45 steals were a team-high. Green also returns as Michigan State's third leading scorer from a year ago and he was also third on the team in assists.

Two other juniors being asked to step up and play big roles again are guard Corey Luscius and forward Delvon Roe. Luscius comes off a sophomore season where he only started six games, but made the biggest shot of the season with a buzzer-beating bucket in the second round of the NCAA Tournament against Maryland, sending the Spartans to the Sweet 16. Meanwhile, Roe did start 30 games for Michigan State last year and led the team in blocked shots with 35 of them. He

also shot 55.3 percent from the field a year ago, which was second on the team.

The Spartans add four freshmen to the roster, two of which clearly stand out. Keith Appling is a 6-1 point guard from Detroit, and was named Michigan's "Mr. Basketball" last year. Appling was also selected as a McDonald's All-American after leading Pershing High School with 28.1 points, six rebounds, five assists, and three steals per game as a senior.

Michigan State's other big acquisition in recruiting was center Adreian Payne, who enters his freshman campaign listed at 6-10. As a high school senior, the Dayton, Ohio product led his team to a state championship and averaged 15.6 points, 11.3 rebounds and four blocks per game last year.

Right now, the Spartans look like a team that's not only in prime position to win an extremely challenging Big Ten this season, but also to make a trip to Houston, Texas in April for their third consecutive Final Four appearance.