

# 11/12/2012: State of the Big Ten, Volume 73 (premium)

*Every Monday, we will be running a weekly series titled "State of the Big Ten," which will be made available to all members of HawkeyeDrive.com. This series of columns will focus on one major headline regarding the conference and go in-depth on the subject at hand.*

By Brendan Stiles

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The start of the 2012-13 college basketball season had an unusual start to it. Not because there were three different games scheduled for its opening day on aircraft carriers (plus one game on an American Air Force base in Germany), but because all three of the mainland games on those aircraft carriers were either delayed or canceled altogether.

Sure enough, one of those games involved No. 4 Ohio State, who was scheduled to open its season against Marquette last week on the USS Yorktown in Mount Pleasant, S.C.

After Ohio State's women's squad played Notre Dame right beforehand, the men's game featuring the Buckeyes and Golden Eagles was originally delayed 30 minutes due to condensation on the court since this game was being played outdoors. Time passed, temperatures dropped, and the moisture was still there, prompting the decision made by all parties involved to just cancel the game.

Kudos have to be given here because the decision to cancel the game was the correct one. Is it a shame these teams can't reschedule this game, possibly to be played in another venue? Sure it is. But let's be real here. Canceling this game isn't going to affect either Ohio State or Marquette in the big

picture.

Both are going to be tournament teams come March barring absolutely disastrous seasons beyond anyone's imagination. It isn't as though either team is going to be on the bubble and needing a win over the other to pad its NCAA tournament résumé in the eyes of a selection committee. Ohio State is coming off playing in the Final Four and still has games against Duke and Kansas on the horizon. As for Marquette, it plays in a Big East conference that might be as difficult as the Big Ten, so plenty of opportunities still remain for the Golden Eagles as well.

But let's get to the bigger issue here – player safety. The last thing either of these teams needed was a significant injury to one of its star players because the hardwood isn't adequate enough to deal with moisture stemming from cool temperatures and being on a carrier.

Look, it's great that college basketball teams are taking the initiative to recognize those who serve the country on Veteran's Day weekend. There's nothing wrong with that at all. As far as these games themselves are concerned, Michigan State and North Carolina showed last year this could be done accordingly if every possible scenario is planned out.

Those involved should've known something like this could happen, though. It's understandable why teams want to be associated with games like these because the publicity is through the roof (especially for teams like Ohio State, Marquette and anyone else involved in carrier games last weekend). But at the same time, there's enough time for events like this to be planned properly.

Clearly, this particular game wasn't and the decision made was one that had to be made, period.