

Chapter 2 - Brian Breslin



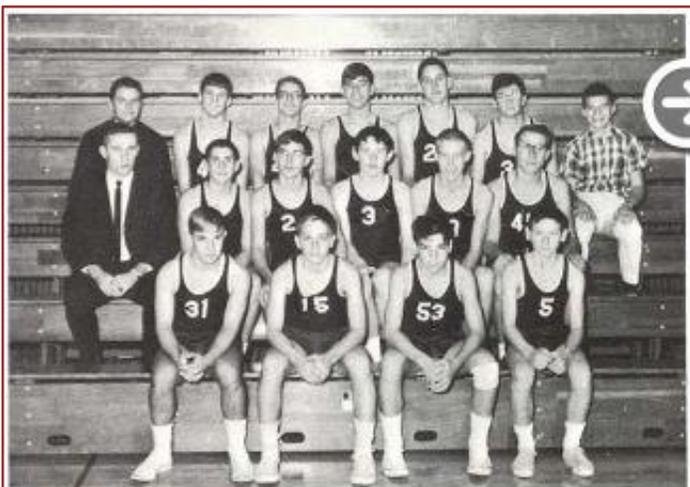
Brian Breslin

Personal: Brian Scott Breslin, son of legendary athlete and administrator Jacweir “Jack” Breslin and Sheila Renee Scott, was born on February 17, 1951. During the seasons that Brian played for the Spartans, his father, Jack Breslin, was Executive Vice President of Michigan State University. Brian earned his Bachelor of Science in Food Systems & Economic Management in 1977.

Okemos High School

1965-66

Breslin played basketball for Okemos High for only one season, his freshman year, after which his parents moved the family to nearby East Lansing where Brian played basketball three seasons for East Lansing High School during his sophomore to senior years.



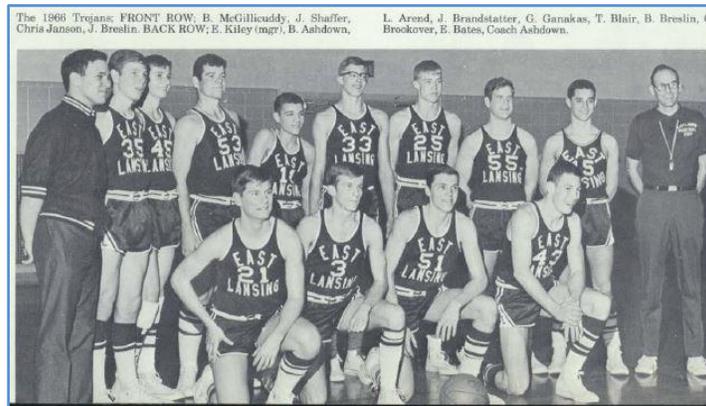
Freshman basketball team, Row 1; Mike Hill, Jim Schaberg, Kelby Heinisch, Yanko Zecevic. Row 2; Coach Bob Porritt, Tim Rolph, Ron Wheeler, Brian Nestor, Brian Breslin, Ken Forsberth. Row 3; Jon Nichols, Chuck Campbell, Tom Gao, Marc Neifert, Mark Rittenger, Earl Downes and Bill Moffitt.

East Lansing High

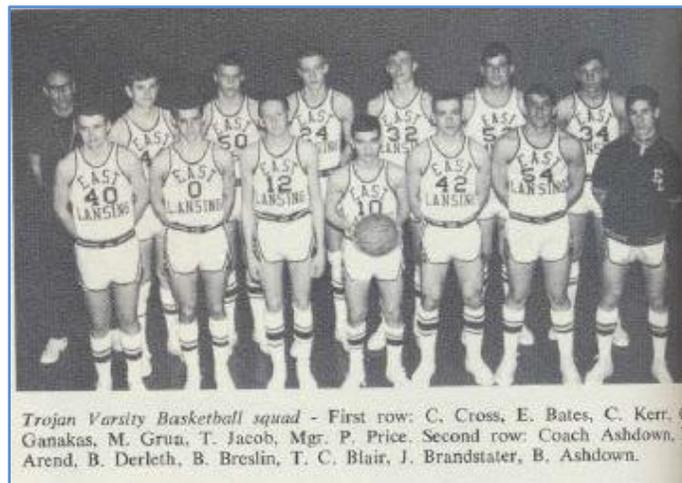
1966-69 – During three seasons playing basketball for the Trojans of East Lansing High, Breslin received numerous honors, including 1st Team All-State – Detroit Free Press; 1st Team All-State – UPI; 2nd Team All-State – AP; 1st Team All-City; 1st Team All-Conference; Honorable Mention All-American – Coach & Athlete Magazine; Team Most Valuable Player; and two season records: single season scoring record holder and most rebounds (289) in one season.



Brian Breslin (Yearbook Photos - 1967 Sophomore and 1968 Junior)



Brian Breslin (#25) (1967 Yearbook Photo)



Brian Breslin (#24) (1968 Yearbook Photo)



Action Photos of Brian Breslin (#24)



East Lansing High School Senior Brian Breslin (1969 Yearbook Photo)

Michigan State University

As a Spartan, Breslin played on the freshmen team (1969-70) and then three seasons (1970-71, '71-'72 and '73-'74) on the varsity team at 6'5".



Brian Breslin (#42)

1969-70

Breslin's first freshmen game was on November 25, 1969, with the freshmen team losing, 105-64, to the varsity unit. Brian led the freshmen with 17 points on eight field goals and 1-1 on free throws ([Source](#)).

On December 1, the Spartans frosh unit defeated **Grand Rapids Junior College**, 106-87 loss, with Breslin contributing 10 points ([Source](#)). On December 6, the frosh squad beat **Toledo**, 89-74, with Breslin tossing in 16 points as the Spartans second highest scorer ([Source](#)).

On January 10, the frosh unit downed **Henry Ford Community College**, 98-63, with Breslin scoring 30 points, hitting 12 of 15 shots from the floor and 7 of 7 free throws ([Source](#)). On January 17, against the **University of Illinois** freshmen team, Breslin "gunned in a jump shot as the buzzer sounded to give Michigan State's freshmen basketball team its fourth straight victory of the season, an 88-66 triumph over Illinois' freshman team at...Jenison Fieldhouse.... Breslin...took a pass from out of bounds and hit a 12-footer for the winning basket. Breslin finished with 35 points leading both teams ([Source](#)). On January 20, the freshmen squad topped **Flint Junior College**, 98-95, for State's sixth straight victory. Breslin was the Spartans second leading scorer with 23 points ([Source](#)).

On January 24, the Spartans upped their won-loss record to 7-0 with a 79-73 victory over **Michigan** after trailing 48-39 at the half. Breslin put MSU ahead for good with two baskets that broke a 62-all tie and pacing the Spartan scorers with 21 points ([Source](#)).

On February 4, at South Bend (Indiana), the frosh unit suffered its first defeat with a 92-88 loss to **Notre Dame** in spite of Breslin being the Spartans second leading scorer with 20 points ([Source](#)). On February 7, the **Central Michigan** freshman outrebounded their way to a 70-56 victory over the Spartans, with Breslin scoring 13 points ([Source](#)). On February 10, the Spartans rallied late to down **St. Clair Community College**, 66-65, with Breslin scoring 13 points ([Source](#)).

On February 24, the Spartans avenged one of two early-season losses, nipping **Central Michigan**, 83-82, in a foul-plagued game. While the Spartans lost two players on fouls and had two with four, Central Michigan lost five players on fouls and had two more with four in the foul-filled game— **Central Michigan** was whistled down 38 times and State 26. Breslin topped all scorers with 27 points, making six of eight field goal attempts and sinking 15 of 19 free throws ([Source](#)).

On March 3 the MSU frosh cagers closed out their season with a 10-2 record with a 74-72 victory over the **University of Detroit**, their only two losses having been at **Central Michigan** and at **Notre Dame**. Breslin led all scorers with 29 points ([Source](#)).

The Spartan frosh ended their 1969-70 season with a 10-2 record (not including the varsity-frosh game or one regular season game not documented above). Over 11 of the 12 regular season game, Breslin averaged 21.5 points per game.

Looking to next season (1970-71), varsity coach Gus Ganakas projected Breslin as “a possible starter because Ganakas says: ‘he can fill one of our voids.’ The coach commented...: ‘Brian has the desire and ability to play aggressive, defensive basketball, and that is what we need’” ([Source](#)).

1970-71

Before the start of the regular season, the Spartan varsity squad blitzed the Michigan State Alumni, 97-54, with Breslin contributing eight points ([Source](#)). On the eve of the Spartans’ opener against **Northern Illinois**, *State Journal* Sports Editor Bob Hoerner projected that “Breslin probably will be the first reserve to go into the game, and could easily be a starter by the time the [Big Ten] conference campaign starts in January ([Source](#)). The Spartans 1970-71 roster is shown in the photo below and listed on the following page.



1970-71 Michigan State Men's Basketball Team (#42 Brian Breslin)

Courtesy: MSU Archives

1970-71 Michigan State Spartans men's basketball team						
No	Name	Pos	Year	Height	Pts	Reb
10	Brad VanPelt	F	SO	6-5	4.5	2.9
11	Gary Ganakas	G	SO	5-5	2.1	0.9
13	Gary Przybylo	G	JR	6-0	0.3	-
14	Johnnie Brown	G	JR	6-1	0.6	-
21	Rudy Benjamin	G	SR	6-2	21.7	4.0
22	Bill Kilgore	C	SO	6-7	14.2	12.9
24	Ron Gutkowski	F	JR	6-6	7.3	3.5
25	Larry Ike	F	SO	6-3	0.6	-
31	Eddie Humphrey	G	SR	6-2	2.0	-
32	Jeff VanderLende	F	SO	6-7	3.2	2.9
33	Paul Dean	F	SR	6-1	4.6	2.0
35	Pat Miller	G	JR	6-2	11.3	5.2
42	Brian Breslin	F	SO	6-5	7.8	4.0
43	Jim Shereda	C	SO	6-7	1.3	-
45	William Cohrs	C	JR	6-6	1.3	0.7

Non-Conference

But the Spartans debut fell short against **Northern Illinois**, with the Spartans losing by just one point, 76-75. "Trailing by five to eight points most of the game, the Spartans rallied in the final three minutes to tie the count at 75-75 on sophomore Brian Breslin's tip-in shot" ([Source](#)). Breslin scored eight points on four baskets but was 0-3 from the free throw line.

On December 5 the Spartans pulled out an "upset" 72-62 overtime victory over **Toledo**, with Breslin scoring eight points but again was 0-3 from the charity stripe. After the first two games Breslin had grabbed a dozen rebounds, scored eight points in each game, and was eight of 18 from the floor for 45 per cent ([Source](#)). At the post-game press conference with coach Ganakas:

Someone asked about sophomore Brian Breslin's free throw shooting. He missed all three of his chances in the game and is 0 for 6 in two games.

"Basketball is a crazy game," Gus started his explanation. "We worked out at noon at the Toledo fieldhouse and finished the session with a free throw shooting contest. Who do you think won? Brian Breslin, of course. Beat every player on the team." ([Source](#))

On the eve of the Spartans' December 12 game against **Western Michigan**, a *State Journal* headline read:

**Breslin Earns
Starter's Role**

The article provided the following analysis:

Brian Breslin, the former East Lansing player who is one of eight sophomores on the Spartan squad of 15 this season, had long playing stints against Northern Illinois and Toledo, and, except at the foul line where he has missed six in a row, played well. He'll get his first starting assignment Saturday when the Spartans host Western Michigan at Jenison Fieldhouse. Tip-off time is 8 p.m.

On December 12, the Spartans downed **Western Michigan**, 97-85, with Breslin starting at forward, scoring 13 points on five field goals and 3-5 on free throws ([Source](#)).



SOPHOMORE BRIAN BRESLIN
Former Trojan to Start With Spartans

Former Trojan (But Originally an Okemos Chieftain)

On December 14, the Spartans notched an “easy 99-75 victory” over **Butler University**, with Breslin scoring 13 points on six field goals and 1-1 from the charity stripe ([Source](#)).

On December 15, the Spartans lost to the **Australian National Basketball Team**, 73-63. Breslin scored 10 points on four field goals and 2-3 on free throws ([Source](#)).

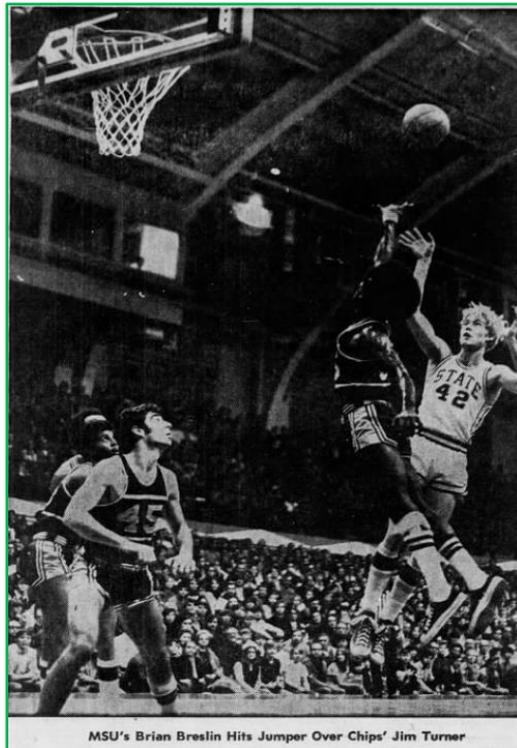


Brian Breslin (#42) goes for Rebound Grabbed by State's Jeff VanderLende

On December 18, the Spartans were in Albuquerque, New Mexico to square off against the **University New Mexico** in the Lobo Invitational Tournament, with Breslin averaging 10.5 points per game ([Source](#)). The Spartans “handed the previously undefeated Lobos a shocking 73-69 come-from-behind victory” (Source) to which Breslin contributed eight points on three field goals and 2-2 from the foul line.

The following evening, December 19, the Spartans downed **Rutgers**, 81-71, for the championship of the Lobo Invitational with Breslin the fourth highest Spartan scorer, chipping in 11 points on a basket and 9-13 shooting from the foul line ([Source](#)).

On December 22, the Spartans downed **Central Michigan**, 85-74, for their sixth straight victory, with Breslin contributing 11 points on four field goals and 3-4 from the foul line ([Source](#)).



MSU's Brian Breslin Hits Jumper Over Chips' Jim Turner

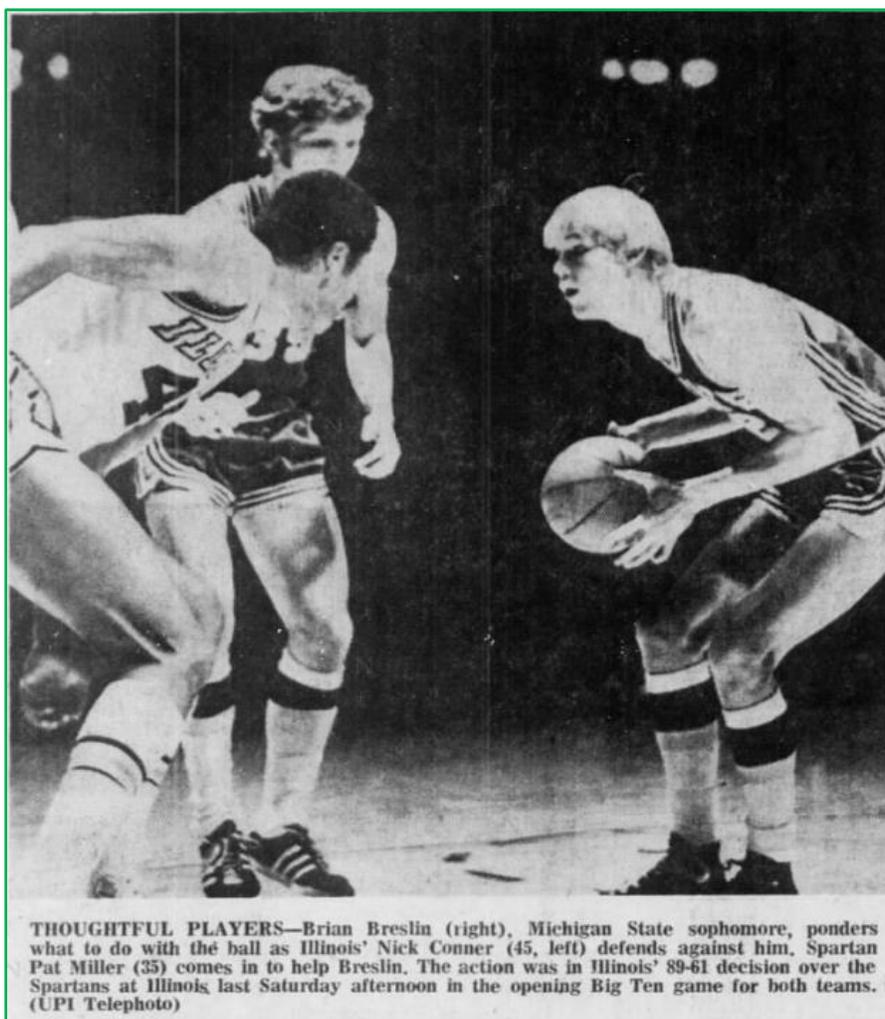


BLOCKED OFF—Michigan State's littlest Spartan, Gary Ganakas, spotted teammate Brian Breslin (42) but before he could get off the pass he ran into Central's Jim Turner who cut off the attempt. Ganakas, son of Spartan head coach Gus, prepped at East Lansing High along with Breslin. Spartans gained 85-74 victory, their sixth of the season in seven games. (State Journal Photo)

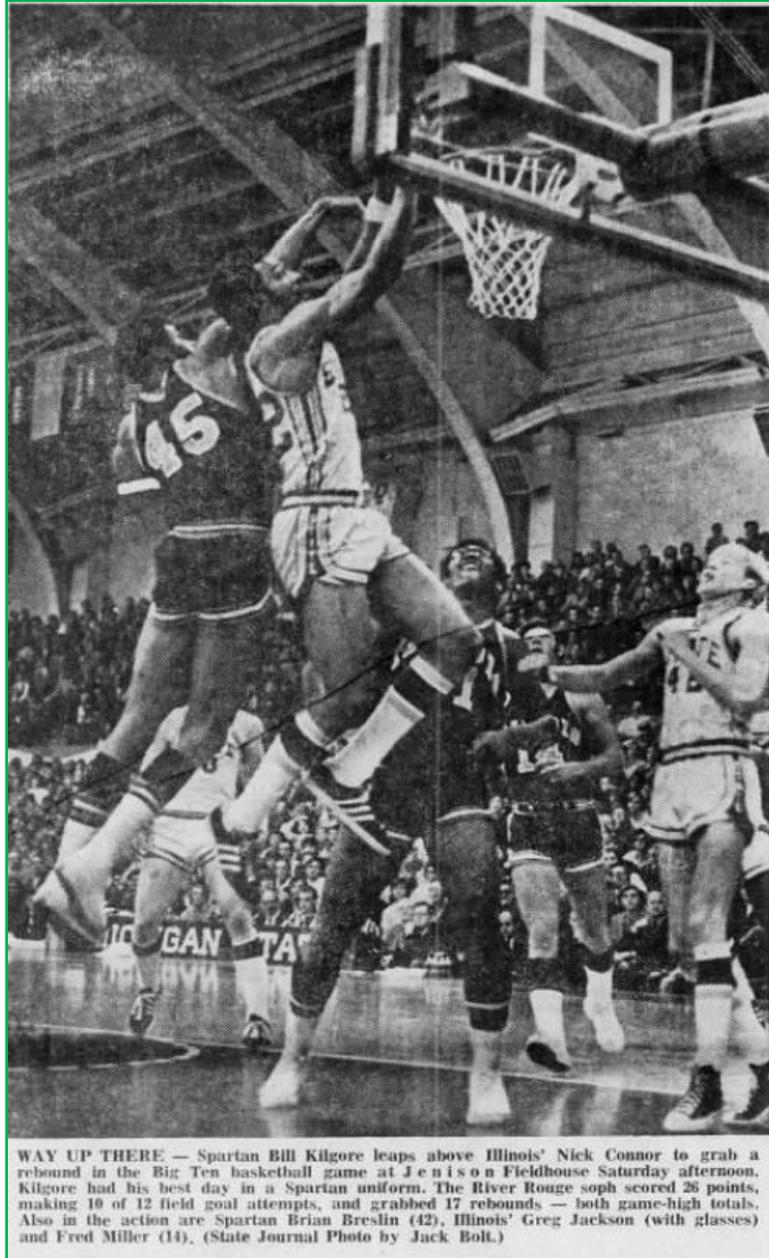
On December 29, the Spartans lost, 77-64 to No. 4 ranked **Southern California** in the Trojan Invitational basketball tournament in Los Angeles. The next day, December 30, the Spartans suffered their second loss in a row, this time to **Tennessee**, 81-70. Against the Volunteers Breslin was the Spartans third highest scorer with 13 points on five field goals and 3-4 at the foul line ([Source](#)).

Big Ten Conference

On January 9 the Spartans opened their Big Ten season with an 89-61 loss to **Illinois**, with Breslin leading the Spartans in scoring with 14 points, hitting on six of nine field goal attempts and 2-4 from the charity stripe ([Source](#)).



On January 13 Michigan State ended a three-game losing streak, defeating **Iowa**, 84-81, with Breslin the second highest Spartan scorer, chipping in 17 points on seven field goals and 3-5 from the foul line ([Source](#)). But, in their January 16th return match against **Illinois**, the Spartans lost, 69-67, with Breslin scoring only seven points on three field goals and 1-1 from the foul line ([Source](#)).



On January 26, the Spartans returned to action but lost 104-80, to No. 7 **Notre Dame** in South Bend, with Breslin going scoreless (0 field goals and 0-1 from the foul line) ([Source](#)).

On January 30, the Spartans traveled to Columbus for the first of a back-to-back series against **Ohio State** and came out the winner, 82-70, although Breslin scored only one point on 1-1 shooting from the free throw line ([Source](#)). On February 6, in East Lansing, **Ohio State** evened the count with Michigan State for the year with an 87-76 win over the Spartans, with Breslin contributing three points on a basket and 1-3 shooting from the charity stripe.

On February 9, at Jenison Fieldhouse, the Spartans came close to upsetting **Indiana**, falling short, 71-70, with Breslin coming off the bench to play a strong role in the battle. "Breslin was State's top scorer with 18, making eight of 10 field goal attempts [and 2-5 from the foul line]. He also led the Spartan rebounders with seven" ([Source](#)). Just prior to the Spartans next game with **Minnesota**, the *State Journal* noted that "Breslin, who was a starter most of the season, ...came off the bench against the Hoosiers and turned in his top performance of the year. He led the Spartan rebounders with seven and the scorers with 18, his personal high as a Spartan" ([Source](#)).

On February 13, **Minnesota** hand the Spartans their third straight conference loss, 97-86, in Minneapolis. Breslin contributed eight points on four field goals and 0-3 from the charity stripe ([Source](#)). On February 16, **Indiana** handed Michigan State its fourth straight conference loss, downing the Spartans, 90-76. Breslin again contributed eight points on two field goals and 4-5 shooting from the charity stripe ([Source](#)).

On February 21, the Spartans were back on the winning track, defeating **Wisconsin**, 97-78, though Breslin scored only 2 points on a field goal and 0-1 from the foul line ([Source](#)). On February 28, at Lafayette, a hot **Purdue** team scorched the Spartans, 100-70. Breslin scored six points on two baskets and 2-2 on free throws ([Source](#)). On March 2, in a return match at Jenison Fieldhouse, the Spartans fell short, losing to **Purdue**, 65-60, with Breslin scoring only three points on 3-4 on free throws ([Source](#)).

On March 9, the Spartans upped their Conference wins to four with a 73-71 win over **Minnesota**, with Breslin (with right hand on #32 in below photo) contributing 2 points on a field goal ([Source](#)).



TRAPPED — Minnesota No. 32, Jerry Pyle, seems trapped here by teammate Ollie Shannon, No. 22, and leaping Brian Breslin of Michigan State. The fact that Breslin was using him for added height (note the hand on Pyle's shoulder) didn't help his feelings at all. State bagged its fourth Big Ten victory, 73-71, at Jenison Fieldhouse.

On March 13, at Evanston, Illinois, the Spartans lost to last-place **Northwestern**, 85-67, with Breslin scoring five points on two field goals and 1-1 on free throws ([Source](#)).

The Spartans finished the season 10–14, 4–10 in Big Ten play to finish in a three-way tie for seventh place. One explanation for the Spartans not winning more games during the 1970-71 season was the Spartans losing Ralph Simpson at the end of the 1969-70 season (his sophomore year and the year Breslin played on the Spartans freshman squad). The *State Journal* provided this analysis:

This was supposed to be Ralph Simpson's senior year of basketball at Michigan State.
This was going to be the big one.
The late John Benington, coach of the Spartans when the talented Detroit Pershing High standout enrolled at MSU, made up the schedule for this season.
With Simpson in the lineup, Benington went after and got the top opponents. The Spartans are contracted to meet Missouri, play Adolph Rupp's Kentucky team at Lexington, compete in the Tennessee Tournament along with Penn State and Colorado State, then play in the Bluebonnet Tournament in the Astrodome at Houston along with Houston, Texas A&M and LSU, and then, of course, play a full Big Ten schedule.
But, as you know, Simpson isn't with the Spartans anymore. He quit the squad after his sophomore year and signed a million dollar contract with the Denver Rockets in the ABA.
But the tough schedule still must be played.

Laurels

In spite of teammates with higher scoring averages, Breslin was an integral part of the Spartans team during the 1970-71 season, leading to Brian being awarded a varsity letter ([Source](#)).

1971-72

Pre-Season Exhibition

On November 23, the Spartans **varsity** squad opened their preseason play with an 88-63 win over the Spartans **frosh**. Breslin scored 13 points on six field goals and 1-2 on free throws ([Source](#)). Former Okemos player Joe Shackleton, now on the Spartans freshman squad, made his debut as a Spartan, started on the frosh squad, and scored nine points on four field goals and 1-2 from the free throw line.

On November 27, the Spartans avenged the prior season's loss to the **Australian Nationals** with a 105-71 win and six Spartans with double doubles. Breslin fell one rebound short of a double double, grabbing nine rebounds and scoring 12 points on four field goals and 4-5 on free throws ([Source](#)).

The 1971-72 Spartans men's basketball roster is provided in the graph below.

1971–72 Michigan State Spartans men's basketball team						
No	Name	Pos	Year	Height	Pts	Reb
10	Brad VanPelt	F	JR	6–5	1.2	1.2
11	Gary Ganakas	G	JR	5–5	4.8	2.3
15	John Benington	G	JR	6–1	0.4	–
21	Tery Fagan	G	SO	5–11	0.4	–
22	Bill Kilgore	C	JR	6–7	14.8	11.1
24	Ron Gutkowski	F	SR	6–6	3.3	2.3
25	Billy Joe DuPree	F	SR	6–4	1.0	–
31	Mike Robinson	G	SO	5–11	24.8	3.0
32	Jeff VanderLende	C	JR	6–7	–	–
34	Tyrone Lewis	G	SO	6–1	2.7	1.1
35	Pat Miller	G	SR	6–2	9.2	5.4
41	Allen Smith	F	JR	6–7	9.0	5.6
42	Brian Breslin	F	JR	6–5	8.0	5.5
44	Mike Ridley	F	SO	6–4	1.5	0.6
43	William Cohrs	C	SR	6–6	0.4	1.2

Non-Conference

The Spartans kicked off their regular season on December 1 at **Missouri**, with a 77-67 loss. Junior Brian Breslin among the team's five starters and scored 10 points on three field goals and 4-6 on free throws ([Source](#)). On December 4, the Spartans beat **South Alabama**, 87-72, at Jenison Fieldhouse, with Breslin scoring seven points on two field goals and 3-6 from the foul line ([Source](#)).

On December 11, the Spartans nipped **Western Michigan**, 66-65, with Breslin scoring five points on two field goals and 1-2 on free throws. While not the Spartans leading scorer, Breslin was crucial to the Spartans taking the lead late in the game. With a little over three minutes left in the game, Western took the lead at 59-57 at which point Spartan senior Pat Miller, who had only two points in the first half, was fouled. "Pat made the first [free throw], missed the second but Brian Breslin who scored his first field goal of the night just moments before, rebounded Pat's missed second shot to give State a 60-59 edge with two and a half minutes to play ([Source](#)). The Spartans closed out the win by scoring two points on free throws and four points on two baskets, while the Broncos, while continuing to score, came up two points short of winning the game. Breslin's rebound of Miller's missed free throw and scoring a bucket proved to be crucial to giving the Spartans a late-game lead and the eventual win.

On December 13, at Lexington, the Spartans pulled off a 91-85 victory over **Kentucky** in the opening game of a four-game, nine-day trip. Only six Spartans played in the game, with Breslin the third leading Spartan scorer with 17 points (seven field goals and 3-4 on free throws) ([Source](#)). Coach Ganakas commented being "greatly impressed with the rebounding of Pat Miller, Brian Breslin and Bill Kilgore ([Source](#)).



Michigan State's Bill Kilgore leaps in front of Kentucky's Jim Andrews for rebound. No. 42 is MSU's Brian Breslin

On December 17, the Spartans downed undefeated **Colorado State**, 67-63, in the opening game of the Volunteer Classic in Knoxville, Tennessee. "Brian Breslin and Pat Miller, State's starting forwards, did most of the work. Breslin was high with 16 points [making seven of ten field goal attempts and two of six free throw attempts], collecting all but two [points] in the second half. Miller had 10 points. Both had seven rebounds" ([Source](#)). "Breslin had an excellent game..., especially in the second half when he pumped in 14 points to lead the winning rally" ([Source](#)). On December 18, in the final of the Volunteer Classic, **Tennessee** downed MSU, 85-61. The Spartans "just couldn't match Tennessee's height on the front line" ([Source](#)) – one reason accounting for Breslin scoring only one basket for a total of two points for the game.

On December 20, the Spartans downed **Butler University**, 77-71, in Indianapolis, with Breslin contributing four points on a field goal and 2-2 from the charity stripe ([Source](#)).

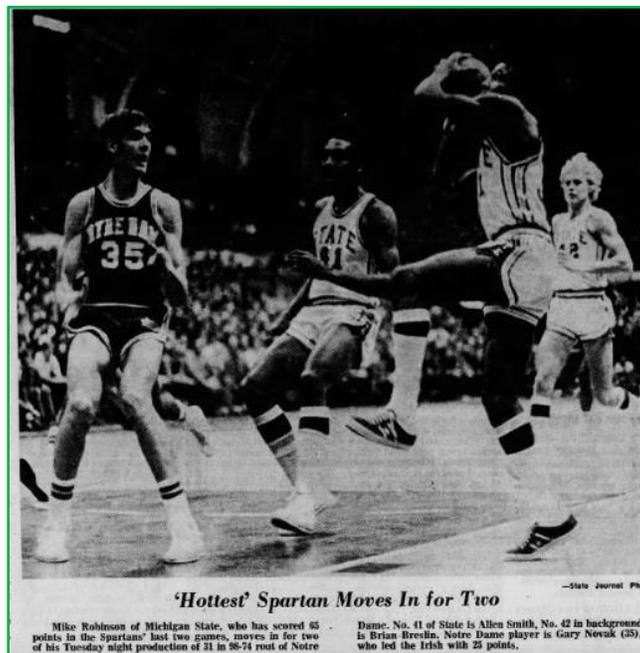
On December 27, the Spartans defeated **Texas A&M** in the Bluebonnet Classic in the Houston Astrodome. In spite of the Spartans making only half of their free throws (11-22) during the game, Breslin, "who had failed to convert twice earlier..., dropped in two clutch tosses with only 10 seconds left in the game to preserve a 67-65 victory" ([Source](#)). In the Classic's championship game on December 28, **Houston** downed the Spartans, 106-73, with Breslin contributing six points on three field goals ([Source](#)).

Big Ten Conference

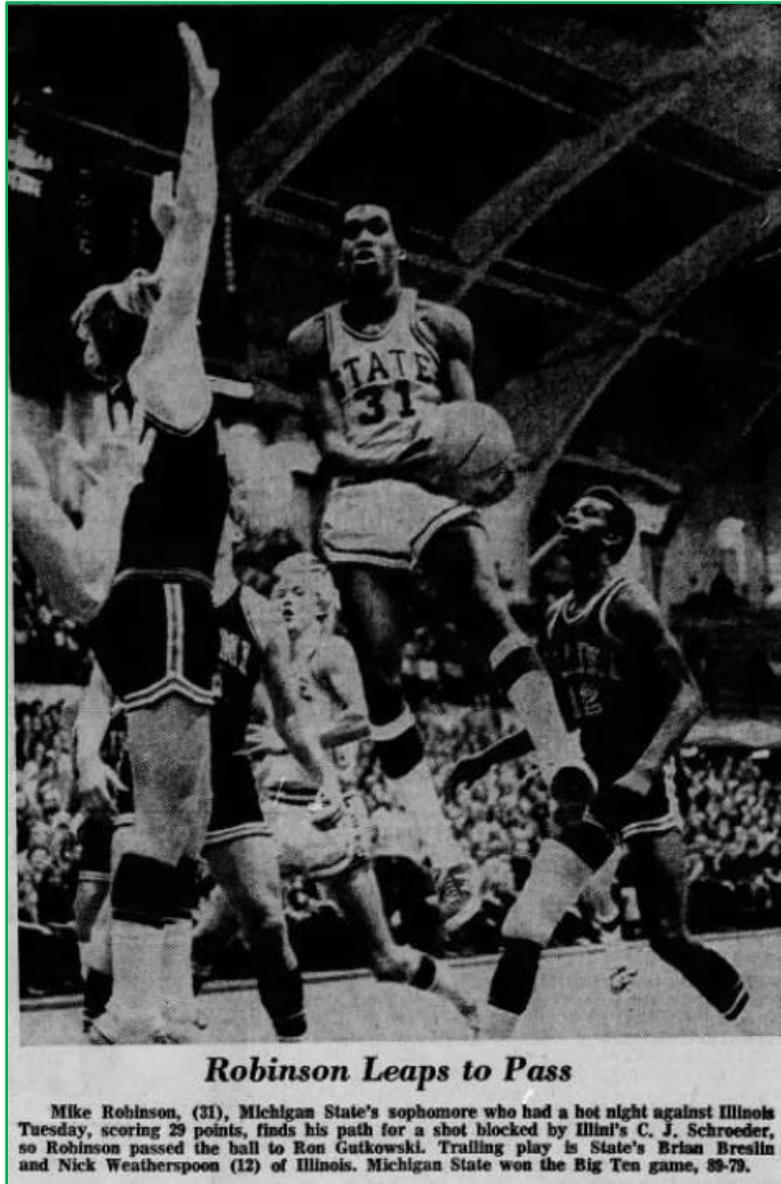
On January 8, the Spartans fell, 83-75 at **Michigan**, with center Bill Kilgore and forward Brian Breslin leading the Spartans scoring with 20 points each, with Breslin hauling in 11 rebounds ([Source](#)). Breslin's 20 points came on nine field goals and 2-2 from the free throw line. On January 11, the Spartans downed **Wisconsin**, 83-76, at Jenison Fieldhouse. In a game with streaky Spartan scoring, "Breslin couldn't buy a basket in the first half, closing with two points on a couple of free throws. But, he sparked [a] 10-in-a-row rally [in the second half] by making three straight to move State from a two-point lead (57-55) to an eight point bulge at 63-55. He finished with 13 points [on five field goals and 3-5 on free throws]" ([Source](#)).

On January 18, the Spartans fell in overtime, 76-69, at **Northwestern**, with Breslin contributing four points, on two field goals and 0-2 on free throws, to the Spartans overall effort. On January 22, the Spartans fell, 67-57, to **Minnesota**, a game missed by Breslin due to illness. On January 30, the Spartans spurted past **Indiana**, 83-73, at Jenison Fieldhouse. While listed in the game's box score, Breslin did not score any points and had no free throw attempts ([Source](#)).

On February 1, the Spartans downed non-conference opponent **Notre Dame**, 98-74, with Breslin, yet recovering from an illness, seeing limited playing time and scoring only two points on 2-3 shooting from the foul line ([Source](#)).



On February 8, the Spartans topped **Illinois**, 89-79. "Breslin had one of his best performances of the campaign, making four of seven field goals and grabbing seven rebounds" ([Source](#)) plus 1-1 from the charity stripe for a total of nine points.



On February 12, surviving an Iowa second half rally that wiped out a Michigan State 21-point advantage, the Spartans rallied to down the Hawkeyes, 100-91, with Breslin contributing nine points on four field goals and 1-3 on free throws ([Source](#)).

“The night games on the road are the worst, junior forward Brian Breslin commented the other day when some team members were discussing the problem [of how a visiting team will be “up” for road games]. “When you play in the afternoon, you don’t have to sit around the motels so long. We always have a light workout sometime during the day when we’re on the road, but it’s still a long day waiting for the game. Sometimes I’ll take a couple of showers late in the afternoon just to keep busy. I don’t really know if it helps me or not.” ([Source](#))

The last half of February was not favorable for the Spartans. On February 19, 1972, at Lafayette, a taller **Purdue** team out-rebounded and outscored the Spartans, 92-68, with Breslin netting only one basket for two points ([Source](#)). On February 26, at home against **Iowa**, the Spartans lost 102-98. Breslin scored a career high of 23 points before fouling out ([Source](#)). On February 29 at Madison, the Spartans lost to **Wisconsin**, 101-74, with Breslin netting only three points on 3-4 shooting from the foul line ([Source](#)).

During the first half of March, the Spartans fared better, winning two home games and losing one away game. On March 4, the Spartans defeated **Michigan**, 96-62, with Breslin netting five points on two field goals and 1-1 from the foul line ([Source](#)). On March 7 at Columbus, the Spartans lost to **Ohio State**, 92-73, with Breslin scoring 11 points on four field goals and 3-5 shooting from the charity stripe ([Source](#)). On March 11 at home in Jenison Fieldhouse, the Spartans downed **Northwestern**, 57-52, with Breslin contributing five points on two field goals and 1-1 from the foul line ([Source](#)).

The Spartans finished the season 13–11, 6–8 in Big Ten play to finish in a tie for fifth place.

1972-73

Breslin did not play for the Spartans during the 1972-73 season, although sophomore **Joe Shackleton** (an Okemos graduate) was on the team. The reason for Breslin's departure from the Spartans team was announced by the *State Journal* on November 17:

Spartan Cage Squad

Brian Breslin, a part-time starter for Michigan State over the past two seasons, has quit the Spartan varsity basketball team.

The former East Lansing High star announced his decision Friday, one day before he was slated to play in Michigan

State's Green and White basketball game. That game is scheduled for Saturday at 4 p.m. in Jenison Fieldhouse.

BRESLIN, WHO started 35 of 48 games since joining the varsity, averaged 7.7 points as a sophomore and 7.9 as a junior. He is a 6-5 senior.

"I'm very disappointed with his decision, although I respect it," said head coach Gus Ganakas. "We counted on him for a lot of action this year, in fact, with his experience he was the player to beat for one of the forward slots."

Breslin, who said that basketball was too physically tiring for him, said he wanted to concentrate on his academics and devote more of his time toward his major of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management.

"WE'RE GOING to miss his hustle and all-around play at both ends of the court," Ganakas said.

1973-74

By mid-October of 1973 and the Spartans 1973-74 season looming on the horizon, the *Lansing State Journal* broke two stories of note. The first, published on October 12, heralded the following:

Rex-Breslin

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Rex, Franklin, announce the engagement of their daughter, Melinda, to Brian Breslin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacweir Breslin, 945 Pebblebrook Lane, East Lansing.

Then, four days later, on October 16, the *LSJ* reported not only that, after sitting out the prior year, 6-6 senior Brian Breslin had returned to play on the Spartans varsity squad:

JOINING MICHIGAN
State's basketball team this season after sitting out last year is 6-6 senior Brian Breslin of East Lansing.
"Brian definitely can help us, the only question is how much the layoff will hurt him," Ganakas said. "His experience is a plus for us, though."

Based on their past performance as scorers, other key players on the Spartans squad for the 1973-74 season included senior Mike Robinson at guard (22.4 ppg), junior Lindsay Hairston (16.2 ppg), and sophomore Terry Furlow (14.1 ppg). Breslin's return also upped the Spartans team roster to include two Okemos basketball players: **Breslin** (who had played for Okemos as a freshman) and junior **Joe Shackleton** (#34 in team photo below).



Courtesy: MSU Archives

1973-74 Michigan State Spartans men's basketball team						
No	Name	Pos	Year	Height	Pts	Reb
12	William Glover	G	JR	6-2	7.0	2.2
15	Steve Borenstein	G	JR	5-10	-	-
21	David Cross	F	JR	6-5	-	-
22	Lovelle Rivers	F	JR	6-5	0.2	0.8
23	Benny White	G	SO	5-8	2.4	1.1
24	Cedric Milton	C	SO	6-9	4.7	3.4
25	Terry Furlow	F	SO	6-4	14.1	7.1
31	Mike Robinson	G	SR	5-11	22.4	2.9
32	Peter Davis	G	JR	6-1	5.4	1.2
33	Edgar Wilson	F	FR	6-4	2.7	1.6
34	Joe Shackleton	F	JR	6-2	0.3	0.1
41	Thomas McGill	F	JR	6-4	4.5	3.5
42	Brian Breslin	F	SR	6-5	4.4	2.6
44	Robert Chapman	F	FR	6-2	-	-
45	Lindsay Hairston	C	JR	6-7	16.2	13.6
-	Wayne Butler	F	FR	6-5	-	-
-	Dave Jackson	F	SO	6-4	-	-
-	Jim Shereda	C	SR	6-8	-	-
-	Kevin Vandenbussche	G	FR	6-4	-	-

Pre-Season Exhibition

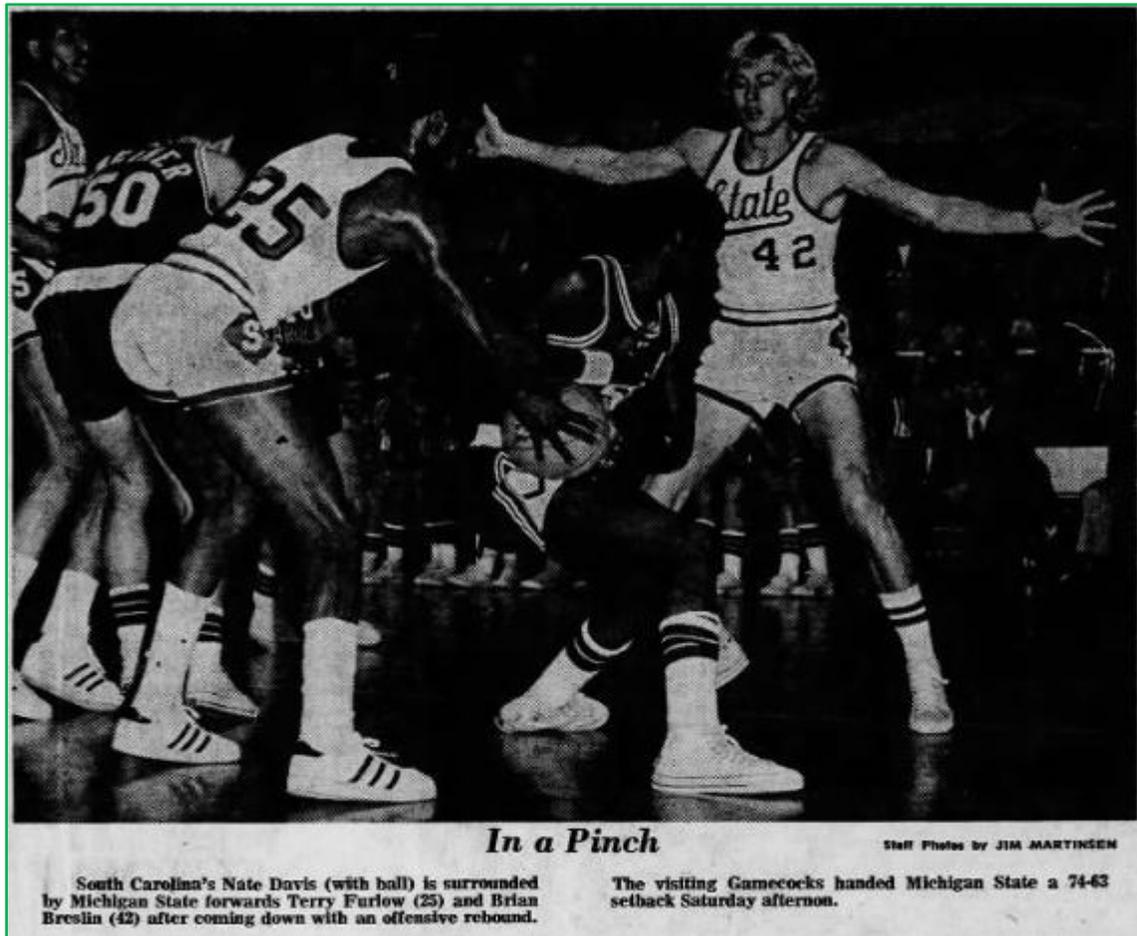
The Spartans kicked off the new season on November 20 with the annual Green and white game and the Green team posting a 95-81 victory. Breslin scored 10 points for the White team on four baskets and 2-4 on free throws, while former Okemos teammate Shackleton scored 16 points on eight field goals ([Source](#)).

Non-Conference

On the eve of Michigan State's opener on December 1 against **Central Michigan**, *LSJ* reported:

An interesting sidelight to Saturday's game is the fact that Breslin, who sat out last season and is eligible this year because of the red-shirt rule, is getting married tonight. Plans were made months ago that Nov. 30 was the big date, and couldn't be changed when Brian decided to come out for the team. He'll join the squad in Mt. Pleasant on Saturday.

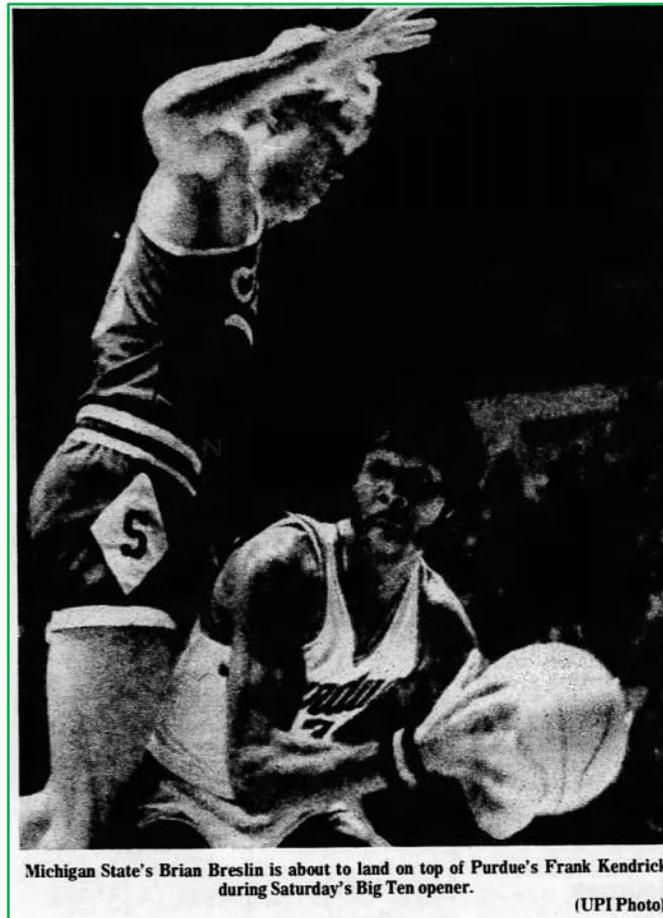
In their December 1st opener at Kalamazoo, the Spartans downed **Central Michigan**, 78-70; while the box score reports Breslin as having played in the game, he did not score any points ([Source](#)). On December 8, the Spartans lost at home, 74-63, to **South Carolina**, with the box score again showing that Breslin (#42) entered the game (see photo below) but didn't score ([Source](#)).



On December 10, the Spartans downed **Eastern Michigan**, 91-69, with Breslin scoring six points on two field goals and 2-2 from the charity stripe ([Source](#)). On December 15, the Spartans defeated **Western Michigan**, 85-76, though the box score doesn't list Breslin as having played ([Source](#)). On December 18, home team **Toledo** downed the Spartans, 79-51, with Breslin scoring two points on a field goal ([Source](#)). On December 22, at **Detroit Mercy**, the Spartans fell in overtime, 73-71, with Breslin scoring three points on a field goal and 1-2 on free throws ([Source](#)). On December 29, playing in the Maryland Invitational Tournament at College Park, Michigan State lost to **Boston College**, 94-81, with Breslin scoring eight points ([Source](#)). On December 30, in the invitational's consolation game, the Spartans defeated **Holy Cross**, 97-85, with Breslin notching five points on two field goals and 1-2 on free throws ([Source](#)).

Big Ten Conference

On December 5, the Spartans kicked up their Big Ten season at West Lafayette with a 77-75 loss to **Purdue** after having led by 18 points. Brian Breslin “made only his third start of the season and responded with 19 points before fouling out. He also did a fine defensive job on the Boilermakers rugged 6-6 senior Frank Kendrick” ([Source](#)). Breslin’s 19 points came on seven field goals and 5-7 from the charity stripe ([Source](#)).



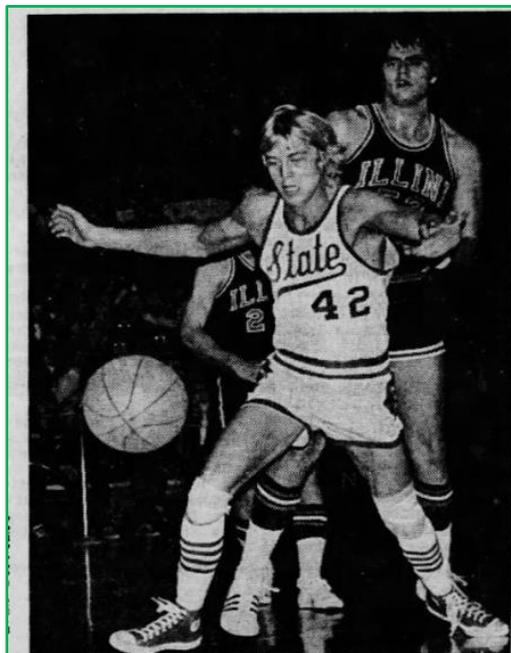
Michigan State's Brian Breslin is about to land on top of Purdue's Frank Kendrick during Saturday's Big Ten opener. (UPI Photo)

Back home in Jenison Fieldhouse on January 12, the Spartans downed **Ohio State**, 83-75; while Breslin played, he did not score any points. On January 14 at **Illinois**, the Spartans came from behind to win, 90-82, with Breslin contributing 12 points on four field goals and perfect 4-4 shooting from the free throw line ([Source](#)).

On December 19, playing at home in Ann Arbor, **Michigan** scored a last second buzzer shot to defeat the Spartans, 84-82. Michigan’s “[Campy] Russell powered the Michigan attack with 27 points, despite a fine defensive effort by 6-5 senior Brian Breslin. ‘Breslin did everything any coach could ask to stop a player of Russell’s caliber,’ [coach] Ganakas said. ‘He got some pretty bad calls against him that really hurt’” ([Source](#)). Breslin scored four points on a field goal and 2-2 from the foul line ([Source](#)).

On January 21, the Spartans downed **Iowa**, 95-86, with Breslin chipping in three points on a field goal and 1-2 from the foul line ([Source](#)). On January 27, at Minneapolis, the Spartans edged **Minnesota**, 67-66, with Breslin netting three field goals for a total of six points ([Source](#)). The Spartans ended January back home in Jenison Fieldhouse with a January 28 victory (“a 93-82 ‘laugher’”) over **Illinois**, with Breslin scoring four points on two field goals ([Source](#)). *LSJ* noted Breslin’s defensive contributions:

Scoring is not a big part of forward Brian Breslin and guard Bill Glover’s responsibilities, but defense is and they held Illinois’ big guns down. Breslin, with help from Wilson and Furlow, stopped the Illini’s top scorer, Rick Schmidt, with just 14 points and Glover held explosive guard Jeff Dawson to 21.

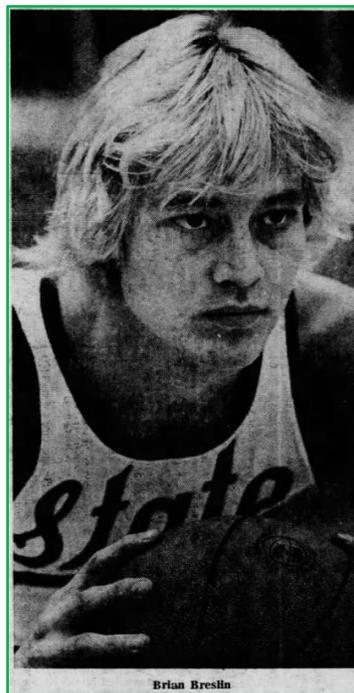


Michigan State’s Brian Breslin chases floating basketball

On February 2, the Spartans defeated league-leading **Purdue**, 76-74, with Breslin contributing four points on two field goals ([Source](#)). On February 4, at home against a #3 ranked non-conference opponent, **Notre Dame**, that recently had ended UCLA’s 88 game winning streak, the Spartans fell to the Irish, 91-89, on a last-second shot. Breslin scored two points on a field goal ([Source](#)). On February 11 in Columbus, the Spartans defeated **Ohio State**, 91-89, with the box score showing that Breslin played in the game although he did not score ([Source](#)).

In a home game on February 16, the Spartans fell to **Minnesota**, 56-50, who played a “brand of slowdown basketball that could lull a hyperactive hyena to sleep” ([Source](#)), with Breslin netting four points on two field goals ([Source](#)). On February 23, Michigan State was back in the winning column, defeating **Northwestern**, 73-70, with Breslin scoring four points on two field goals ([Source](#)).

On February 25 at Bloomington, the Spartans fell to No. 10 and Big Ten leader **Indiana**, 91-85, with Breslin scoring four points on a field goal and 2-2 from the charity stripe ([Source](#)). On March 2 at Madison, the Spartans suffered their second loss in a row, falling to **Wisconsin**, 87-80, with Breslin scoring six points on two field goals and 2-2 from the foul line ([Source](#)).



On March 9 at home, the Spartans' season came to an end at Jenison Fieldhouse, 103-87, to Michigan. While this was the Spartans third loss in a row, Breslin scored four points on two field goals ([Source](#)). The Spartans finished the season 13–11, 8–6 in Big Ten play to finish in a tie for fourth place.

Laurels

Over the three seasons Breslin was a member of the Spartans varsity squad, he earned three varsity letters. While only infrequently the team's leading scorer, over 70 career games, 37 as a starter during his junior and senior years, Breslin averaged nearly seven points and four rebounds per game, his role more as a defensive specialist, called on to guard such Big Ten stars as **Michigan's** Campy Russell, **Indiana's** Steve Green, **Illinois' Nick** Weatherspoon, and **Minnesota's** Jim Brewer ([Source](#)).

Career Statistics as a Spartan

Breslin lettered in all three seasons (1970-71, 71-72, and 1973-74) that he played on the Spartans varsity squad. At the end of three seasons on the varsity squad, Breslin had played in 70 games, averaged 6.7 points per game and four rebounds per game, and shot 44.8% on field goals and 61.3% on free throws. The following two charts provide Brian's statistics on a per game and totals basis.

Per Game

Season	School	Conf	G	GS	MP	FG	FGA	FG%	FT	FTA	FT%	TRB	AST	STL	BLK	TOV	PF	PTS	SOS
1970-71	Michigan State	Big Ten	24			3.0	6.4	.471	1.8	3.1	.568	4.0					2.0	7.8	5.76
1971-72	Michigan State	Big Ten	23	20		3.2	7.8	.411	1.5	2.6	.593	5.5					2.7	8.0	3.38
1973-74	Michigan State	Big Ten	23	17		1.7	3.6	.488	0.9	1.2	.778	2.6					2.3	4.4	4.44
Career	Michigan State		70	37		2.7	5.9	.448	1.4	2.3	.613	4.0					2.3	6.7	4.53

Totals

Season	School	Conf	G	GS	MP	FG	FGA	FG%	FT	FTA	FT%	TRB	AST	STL	BLK	TOV	PF	PTS	SOS
1970-71	Michigan State	Big Ten	24			72	153	.471	42	74	.568	95					49	186	
1971-72	Michigan State	Big Ten	23	20		74	180	.411	35	59	.593	127					61	183	
1973-74	Michigan State	Big Ten	23	17		40	82	.488	21	27	.778	59					52	101	
Career	Michigan State		70	37		186	415	.448	98	160	.613	281					162	470	

G = Games; **GS** = Game Started; **FG** = Field Goals; **FGA** = Field Goal Attempts Per Game; **FG%** = Field Goal Percentage; **FT** = Free Throws Per Game; **FTA** = Free Throw Attempts Per Game; **FT%** = Free Throw Percentage; **TRB** = Total Rebounds Per Game; **PF** = Personal Fouls Per Game; and **PTS** = Points Per Game; and **SOS** = Strength of Schedule (points above/below average, where zero is average, not including non-Division I games)

Over this three-season period, Breslin's true shooting percentage (a measure of shooting efficiency that takes into account 2-point field goals, 3-point field goals, and free throws, averaged .479 (.494 as sophomore, .440 as a junior, and .533 as a senior). Over the same period, Brian's free throw attempt rate (number of free throw attempts per field goal attempt) averaged .386 (.484 as a sophomore, .328 as a junior, and .329 as a senior).

After Michigan State

In 1977, Breslin was hired by Meijer Inc. (Grand Rapids, Michigan). During his 29 years with Meijer, Breslin served in various capacities, including vice president for public and consumer affairs, company and spokesperson, and became senior vice president of human resources and government relations, retiring in 2006. In 2007 he was named executive director of the Gerald R. Ford Foundation, Grand Rapids.

During his career, Breslin was a board member of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Ohio Council of Retail Merchants, working to enhance business and employment opportunities in both states. Also, he served Chairman of the Michigan Grocers Association, a Trustee of the Forest Akers Trust Fund, and on numerous other industry boards and committees.

In 2007, Breslin was inducted into the Greater Lansing Area Sports Hall of Fame.

Brian Breslin – 2007

☆ **Inducted:** 2007

East Lansing High School

Basketball.

1st Team All-State – Detroit Free Press.

1st Team All-State – UPI.

2nd Team All-State – AP.

1st Team All-City.

1st Team All-Conference.

Honorable Mention All-American – Coach & Athlete Magazine.

Team Most Valuable Player.

Single Season Scoring Record Holder

Most Rebounds in One Season.

Michigan State University

Basketball.

Three-year letter winner.

Member of the Michigan State
University Board of Trustees

In 2010, Breslin campaigned for and was nominated to become a member of the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University, winning election for an eight-year term that began January 1, 2011, with his term ending in January of 2019 ([Source](#)).

BRIAN BRESLIN

for MSU
Trustee

The Michigan Republican Convention is August 28, 2010.

BRIAN FOR MSU TRUSTEE



Brian Breslin's deep and abiding love for Michigan State University is what prompted him to seek a Republican nomination for the Board of Trustees.

Between Brian and Melinda's immediate families there are nineteen graduates and post-graduate degrees from Michigan State.

Brian's father, Jack Breslin, served Michigan State with a 38 year career, which culminated in the naming of the Jack Breslin Students Events Center in his honor.

Brian Breslin is now hoping to continue that legacy of service through thoughtful and sensible governance as a conservative Trustee.

Brian Breslin believes the economic changes taking place in Michigan will present Michigan State with difficult challenges in the next decade. Brian has the experience, commitment, and the dedication to help meet those challenges!

Log in and find Brian on [facebook](#)
site design: [kjm design, llc](#)

Paid for by Brian Breslin for MSU Trustee, 5660 Treebrook Ct NE, Ada, MI

In January 11, 2017, Breslin was elected to a two-year term as chair of the Michigan State University Board of Trustees ([Source](#)).

Brian Breslin tapped to lead MSU's Board of Trustees

RJ WOLCOTT
LANSING STATE JOURNAL

EAST LANSING - Members of the Michigan State University Board of Trustees elected new leadership during a brief meeting Wednesday morning.

Joel Ferguson, a Democrat who had served as the board's chair since 2007, nominated Republican Brian Breslin to take over leadership of the board. The other trustees approved Breslin's nomination unanimously.

"Joel has provided a high bar, and I hope I can meet the standard you've set," Breslin said following his election.

Breslin was elected to the board in 2010. He earned his bachelor's degree from MSU while playing basketball for the Spartans. He was an executive at Meijer Inc. before retiring in 2006.

Following the November election, the eight-member board is split evenly between Democrats and Republicans. The Republicans are Melanie Foster, Mitch Lyons, Dan Kelly, who was elected in November and replaced Democrat Diann Woodard, and Breslin. Ferguson, George Perles, Brian Mosallam and



Breslin

Dianne Byrum, who was reelected in November, are Democrats.

Foster nominated Ferguson to serve as vice chair, which was met with unanimous support among board members. During the meeting, Ferguson, a Lansing developer first elected to the board in 1986, praised trustees for not getting caught up in politics during his time on the board.

"We work in a non-partisan way and put MSU first," Ferguson said.

The next meeting of the MSU Board of Trustees is scheduled for Feb. 17.

Contact RJ Wolcott at (517) 377-1026 or rwolcott@lsj.com. Follow him on Twitter @wolcottr.



MATTHEW DAE SMITH/FOR THE LANSING STATE JOURNAL

MSU trustees and members of the public attending the board meeting Friday listen as trustee Mitch Lyons, right, reads from a prepared statement and apologizes for his tweet related to the immigration executive order.



February 17, 2017 Meeting of MSU Board of Trustees with the Public



DAVID JESSE/DETROIT FREE PRESS

Michigan State University Board Chairman Brian Breslin addresses the media Monday following a closed-door meeting on the school's football program.

Source: *Lansing State Journal*, February 17, 2017



Source: *Lansing State Journal*, January 20, 2018



[Brian Breslin Announcing Bill Beekman as MSU's New Athletic Director](#)



[Brian Breslin Announcing Bill Beekman as MSU's New Athletic Director](#)



Interim MSU President John Engler (2nd from left) & Brian Breslin (2nd from right) Introducing Bill Beekman (far right and former OHS Graduate) as MSU's Permanent Athletic Director (July 16, 2018)

On December 14, 2018, Breslin presided over his last meeting as the Chair of the MSU Board of Trustees.

Saying goodbye to outgoing trustees, more takeaways from board meeting



Chairman of the Board of Trustees Brian Breslin speaks at the end of the Dec. 14, 2018 meeting at the Hannah Administration Building. **Matt Schmucker | The State News**

"For his extraordinary leadership, his passion and commitment to his alma mater, and his tireless efforts on behalf of this university, the Michigan State University Board of Trustees offers its heartfelt thanks and sincere gratitude to Brian Breslin," a statement read by Trustee Melanie Foster said.

Looking Back

It took a bit of persistence to connect with **Brian Breslin** during the last year or so that he served as Chair of the Michigan State University Board of Trustees. However, near the end of his term of service to the Board, I finally caught up with him via emails and phone calls. At first Brian was hesitant whether he should be included in this chronicle of **Okemos High Chieftains** who played basketball for **Michigan State University**. Brian explained:

“Thanks for your patience and understanding with my hesitancy to participate in this project. As we have discussed, I find it difficult to number myself with the outstanding varsity players from Okemos, having never played beyond the Okemos freshman squad. Notwithstanding that discomfort, I hope the following is helpful to you in completing your work. I appreciate the fact that you believe I have a place in this history.” (Brian Breslin, personal communication).

With that, Brian kindly shared some memories “looking back” on his basketball career that began with making the 8th grade team in the Okemos Public Schools system and then making the freshman squad at Okemos High.

In what ways did your former coaches at Okemos High School (OHS), East Lansing High School (ELHS), and Michigan State University help you to improve your skills and IQ as a basketball player?

Two men stand out in my mind at Okemos for instilling in me basic principles that I never forgot and which I tried to apply throughout my basketball career. The first was, Bob Walborn, my 8th grade coach and the Junior High School physical education teacher. His insistence on setting screens properly, running the pattern as designed, making sharp angular cuts, and repeating a few plays over and over to perfection is still vivid in my mind. Perhaps, most of all, was his absolute insistence, when playing defense, to never allow your opponent to drive the baseline...even if it meant planting your foot out-of-bounds to accomplish it.

The second man, Ron Mott, was never my coach, officially. He was likely more a mentor. I always think of him as the father of Michigan High School Girls Basketball. I could be wrong, but I believe no one did more than Ron Mott to pioneer girls' basketball in Michigan. In any event, Mr. Mott made it possible to open the Okemos High School gym in the summer for those kids that wanted to play in the evenings. He wasn't a coach, but he sure knew basketball and soon had the kids dividing up into teams, which he informally taught to play...and play fast. Mr. Mott taught us to immediately upon getting a rebound to outlet to a release man at the foul line extended and then quickly cut behind him to begin a fast break...always making sure we outnumbered our opponents before completing it. While other coaches taught me this too, Mr. Mott instilled it at a very young age. But the big principle that Mr. Mott taught me is that basketball at its fundamental core is a combinations

of one-man, or two-man, or three-man play and the other two players need to stay the heck out of their way; always stay in motion, but do not clog up the action side of the floor.

Don Ashdown was my varsity coach at East Lansing High School and is the person most responsible for my development as a high school basketball player. In addition, it needs to be pointed out that, in my junior and senior year at East Lansing, we had a reserve bench that would likely have started at most other high schools in Michigan. This made our practice sessions very rigorous and competitive. The kids that I played with and practiced with everyday contributed tremendously with skill development. With the aforementioned talent base, Mr. Ashdown taught us a variety of motion offenses that were more complex than most other schools we played. Defensively, we had no less than four forms of presses and several versions of zone defenses in addition to man-to-man. In the late 60's, in high school, you just did not see that much variety and it proved very confusing to most of our opponents. He was outstanding in showing us the reasons behind the instructions. He would hold lunchtime film session to review our past games, pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of our execution of plays and formations. Later that day, we'd be practicing them...again. I should also add that Mr. Ashdown was a coach with a calm demeanor. We knew when he wasn't happy with something, but he always approached the correction with reasoned encouragement. This had no small effect on how our team responded in pressure situations and the support we gave each other.

Gus Ganakas was my coach at Michigan State University. Much of what Coach Ganakas taught us, and had us practice, was already familiar in terms of the drills themselves. But what became crystal clear to most of us (me), real quick, was that our definition of conditioning and his were a world apart. Coach Ganakas would never lose a game because his team was not as well conditioned as his opponent; as far as endurance went, we could play with anyone. Coach Ganakas introduced us to a game of speed and half court ball movement that made it very apparent we were no longer in high school. And, we soon realized that his knowledge of the X's and O's and the consequences of failing to execute them properly was showing us a whole new level of basketball awareness. His method, in practice, of bring forward your awareness was mostly through the sound of his whistle and a question...a why? or a how will that...? He was a teacher and he wanted his players to be thinking! Something else, of great importance, that Mr. Ganakas taught us is that being a part of a team means that you have to find and accept your proper role if the team is to succeed. This isn't always easy for 18 to 20 year boys/young men, all of whom were standouts in high school, and most of whom wanted to play in the NBA. However, as I look back, Coach Ganakas taught this "life lesson" very, very well.

After your freshman year at OHS, you transferred to East Lansing High School (ELHS) where you played your last three years of high school basketball. What was (were) the reason(s) for transferring and did you have any strong feelings one way or the other about transferring to ELHS after your freshman year at OHS?

Looking back to when I was 15 or 16 years of age, it's impossible for me to know now why my parents chose to relocate their residence to East Lansing. In fact, I don't recall ever giving it much thought. But, in reflection, I think they wanted a little more room and felt that it was a very sound financial investment. As for me personally, I was sad to leave the classmates [I had been with for] 10 years, but I was also very excited to attend a "big Class A" school. I was very much aware of the ELHS basketball team (Dave Dean, John Fuzak, Lynn Janson, Jim Smith, Bill Struck) from the papers and TV clips...and I knew I would have a chance to play there. Being a Class A school held great fascination for me at that age

What was the biggest challenge transitioning from freshman basketball at OHS to varsity basketball at ELHS?

I don't recall any real challenge on the basketball front. I was just one of four sophomores... Gary Ganakas, Blake Ashdown and T.C. Blair being the others...brought up to the Varsity squad. That's not to say I didn't realize it was special, perhaps unusual, to play on the varsity as a sophomore. And, all four of us wanted to show we deserved the privilege. But, I think that is true for any high school kid playing at any level. As matter of fact, I think that same year Sexton High School had two sophomores starting...Bernard Moore and Jim Breedlove, and maybe Mark Davenport too.

What were the most exciting moments of your basketball career at OHS, ELHS, and MSU?

At OHS, making the 8th grade team and the following season the Freshmen team.

At ELHS...far too many to single out a few. Every game was a pure delight.

At MSU...beating Kentucky at Kentucky...they were very highly ranked (perhaps in the top 10, maybe top 5). We were leading and they made a final run at us. Never have I heard such noise, the place shook. You couldn't feel/hear the ball bounce; the floor vibrated. Truly special. Sometimes, I think, our MSU teams today get to hear that noise level on regular basis. I hope the kids realize how special it is. This is the game that Gus tells the story of his post-game exchange with the legendary Adolf Rupp.

Also, playing against Austin Carr of Notre Dame and Paul Westphal of Southern California. I believe it was the 1970-71 season (I think) [that we played] both teams. This was my first recognition of playing against truly great talent. I was a sophomore. They were both so strong, so fast, and so versatile as to leave you shaking your head. On a more humorous note, I also played in the game at Ohio State University, where we were forced to play in OSU's away uniforms, due to a group of middle-schoolers temporarily borrowing our game uniforms. Their desire to get the late Brad Van Pelt's autograph after the game was their undoing. Brad spotted a warm-up under one of the boy's street clothes, and the rascals were captured.

After three years playing basketball with the Spartans you left the team for one season but then returned to play a final season for the Spartans. Why did you

take that one-season hiatus (a health issue such as an injury, desire to spend more time focusing on your studies, or some other reason that you feel you can share)?

I was behind schedule on getting my degree, knew I was not going to be playing at the next level, knew I needed to focus/spend more time on my classes, and quite frankly, I was physically tired. A year later, I still had classes to complete with a future that included a fall marriage to Melinda. Fortunately, both Coach Ganakas, and then Assistant Coach Bob Nordman, believed I could I still contribute to the 1973-74 team. It's something I look back on with a lot of gratitude.

What were the biggest challenges for you personally during your basketball career in making the transition from high school-level competition to university-level competition?

The biggest challenge for me in the transition from high school to Big Ten college basketball was the level of physical conditioning and mental focus needed to compete at that level. The other aspect that goes hand in hand with it is the importance of time management.

What other memories do you feel are significant as you “look back” on your career as a basketball player in high school and at MSU?

Nothing specific...but without a doubt, the many friendships, and the life lessons of teamwork, competition, and perseverance.

I hope this is helpful. Again, I apologize for the delays, but I'm still not convinced I belong in this story :)” (Brian Breslin, personal communication).



Michigan State University Board of Trustees Chairman announces the selection of Bill Beekman as Michigan State University interim president during a Michigan State University Board of Trustees meeting on Friday January 26, 2018 at the Hannah Administration Building on the MSU campus in East Lansing.
(Photo: Ryan Garza, Detroit Free Press)

**Two Former Okemos High Chieftains at MSU Board of Trustees Meeting
Bill Beekman (MSU Athletic Director) & Brian Breslin (Chair of Board of Trustees)**