

LEGENDS OF THE GAME...

GREG KELSER • Michigan State (1975-79)

Greg Kelsner was a member of the Michigan State basketball team from 1975-79. An All-American and Academic All-American, Kelsner was a key member on Michigan State's first NCAA Championship team. To this day, he is one of just three players in Big Ten history with over 2,000 career points (2,014) and 1,000 career rebounds (1,092).

The son of an Air Force serviceman, Kelsner moved around a lot as a kid, but attended Detroit Henry Ford High School. He joined the Michigan State basketball team for the 1975-76 season and made an immediate impact, ranking third on the team in scoring at 11.7 points per game. As a sophomore, Kelsner had his best statistical season, averaging 21.7 points and 10.8 rebounds per contest, earning second-team All-Big Ten honors.

As a junior co-captain, he helped lead the Spartans to the 1978 Big Ten Championship, averaging 17.7 points, earning second-team all-conference honors once again. The Spartans finished the season with a 25-5 record, going 15-3 in league action and fell one game short of the Final Four. Kelsner was named to the All-Regional Team, averaging 21.7 points and 12.3 rebounds in three tournament games.

The 1978-79 season was a special year for Kelsner and the Spartans. As a team, Michigan State captured the NCAA Championship for the first time in school history, posting a 26-6 record. Kelsner averaged 18.8 points and 8.7 rebounds in earning first-team All-Big Ten and All-America honors. In MSU's run to the NCAA title, Kelsner averaged 25.4 points and 10.6 rebounds, earning Midwest Regional Outstanding Player and All-Tournament Team honors. In the NCAA Championship game against previously undefeated Indiana State, featuring Larry Bird, Kelsner turned in an incredible all-around performance, scoring 19 points, grabbing eight rebounds and dishing out nine assists.

But even more important to Kelsner than any individual athletic accomplishment, was that he was recognized for his excellence in the classroom, earning first-team Academic All-America honors. He received his bachelor's degree in criminal justice. In honor of all his achievements at MSU, his jersey was retired and now hangs in the rafters of the Breslin Center.

After leaving MSU, Kelsner was a first-round draft pick by the Detroit Pistons in the 1979 NBA Draft, earning second-team All-Rookie honors in 1980. Following his six-year NBA career, Kelsner found a home in broadcasting, where he currently provides color commentary for the Pistons and college basketball, having called more than 1,300 games in his career.

