

Michigan State University Women's Basketball

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Michigan State University (MSU) is a Big Ten school. There are 14 schools in the Big Ten. Michigan State University is located in East Lansing, Michigan. Their colors are green and white, and they are known as the Spartans. Basketball began at MSU in 1972. On average, the girl's game tickets range from \$3 to \$14 for a seat. Suzy Merchant has been a coach there since 2007. Coach Merchant is why so many players want to play for Michigan State. I had the opportunity to interview two of Coach Merchant's stand-out players, Tamara Farquhar and DeeDee Hagemann, following the MSU game versus Indiana University on February 12, 2022.



DeeDee and Tamara introduced



Team huddle before the game

Tamara Farquhar is a graduate transfer from Purdue University. She is a 6-foot guard/forward. Tamara is originally from Canada. She played four seasons at Purdue, then transferred to Michigan State. Her influence for transferring was Coach Suzy. She played against coach Suzy and liked her style of coaching. Before game day, she says no saying or anything, she just goes with the flow. She has overcome injuries in her career. During her Junior year at Purdue, she suffered a season-ending injury, thankfully she was able to bounce back and continue her dream of playing at MSU. When asked who inspires her (or who she looks up to), Tamara replied that she looks up to WNBA player Candice Parker because she is a very versatile player and she loves the way Parker plays basketball. On days off from practice, the team likes to go bowling and play at arcades or just watch Netflix.

Tamara commented that playing basketball in the United States is different from playing in Canada. Canada is a team-based structure, while in the U.S. it's developed individually. She also played for the Canadian National Women's development team. Tamara's advice for younger athletes is to work as hard as they can, put in extra hours and study the game. She was inspired by her brother and dad to start playing basketball. She started playing it in middle school with her best friend. After graduation, she plans to move to Florida and get a doctorate degree. Tamara is studying to be a consultant pharmacist.

DeeDee Hagemann is a freshman from Detroit, Michigan. Her real name is Damiya Hagemann, but she prefers DeeDee. She is a 5-7 forward for Michigan State. She is a starter and brings her energy to the game. She was named Michigan's Miss Basketball her senior year in high school. DeeDee was also the 2020-2021 MaxPreps Michigan Player of the year in high school. She led her team to two state championships. She was ranked 5th in her position and 23rd overall by ESPNW. Coming out of high school, she averaged 17.4 points. She chose Michigan State because it was close to Detroit and felt like home. She was chosen as the Big Ten Player of the Week. On game day, her favorite jersey combo is the black jersey with the black Kyries. Her favorite WNBA and NBA players are Sue Bird and Kyrie Irving. On her days off she likes to watch Criminal Minds and rest her body. Sometimes they go out as a team, play arcade games and go bowling. Before each game, she prays during the national anthem. DeeDee's advice to young athletes is to keep working, sacrifice and focus. She was inspired to play basketball by her two sisters, parents, and grandparents. She also was inspired by her uncle Jermaine Jackson. Jermaine played in the NBA on the Bucks, Hawks, and Knicks teams. After graduation, she plans to play professionally then coach basketball. She is majoring in Advertising.

I am grateful I had the chance to watch Tamara and DeeDee in person. I sat behind the MSU bench and had a media pass. Both Tamara and DeeDee played a great game. Watching them was inspiring. It was very interesting to watch Coach Merchant and her interaction with the players. I met DeeDee after the game and had a photo with her. I can now say I am an MSU women's basketball fan.



A photo of DeeDee and I