Travis Walton key to MSU NCAA Championship Title Upset

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If the Michigan State Spartans are to upset the No. 1 seed North Carolina Tar Heels tonight, they will need solid play from their three-year captain and Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year Travis Walton. The MSU senior guard hails from Lima, Ohio and will have a large contingency of family and friends at the National Championship Title Game tonight watching him spot up on North Carolina star point guard and dice thrower Ty Lawson.

"Everybody [would] be watching," stated Michigan State Spartan star Travis Walton about playing basketball as a youth for Lima Senior High School. "You talking trash to your friend, you score on him and try to stop him so he can't talk trash to you. I could stop people."

The oddsmakers at Sportsbook.com don’t give the Spartans much of a chance tonight, the North Carolina Tar Heels are –7.5 point favorites with the total set at 153 points. The money line betting odds show North Carolina –370 odds and the money line betting odds show Michigan State +305 odds.

Walton has been named to the All-Big Ten Defensive Team for the past few seasons and his coaches and teammates alike have a lot of confidence in the 6’2 guards’ ability to shut the opposing team’s top players down. The Ty Lawson assignment in the National Championship Title Game might be the biggest challenge of Walton’s college career. Lawson is widely considered the best point guard in the NCAA and the 6 foot junior is expected to leave for the NBA after the conclusion of the 2009 NCAA Tournament.

"Sometimes it has been 6-6 guys, sometimes it has been 5-10 guys," stated Michigan State Spartans head coach Tom Izzo about Travis Walton's various game day assignments. "Ninety-nine percent of the time, he has answered the bell...If you looked at just talent, I don't know where you'd put him, sixth, seventh, eighth most talented," stated Michigan State Spartan head coach Tom Izzo about three year captain Travis Walton. "If you look at just heart, you'd put him [No.] 1 by a mile."

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