

What To Watch: NCAA Tournament First Round, Thursday



The Ohio State men's basketball team will not take the court until Friday, but the first round of the NCAA Tournament begins on Thursday with 16 games set to tip off.

Nine teams from the Big Ten qualified for the big dance, and three of them will take the court on Thursday with Indiana, Iowa and Michigan all set to play.

THURSDAY'S GAMES TO WATCH

No. 6 Colorado State vs. No. 11 Michigan (12:15 p.m., CBS): Colorado State and Michigan will kick off the festivities, set to tip off as the first game in the round of 64. The Wolverines, favored in this game despite being the lower seed, will be without point guard DeVante' Jones. Michigan made the tournament with a 17-14 record, going 3-2 to close the regular season as head coach Juwan Howard served his suspension for punching a Wisconsin assistant coach.

Howard returned for the Big Ten Tournament, and the Wolverines promptly lost in the second round after blowing a 17-point lead to Indiana in the second half. Colorado State or Michigan will take on either No. 3 Tennessee or No. 14 Longwood.

No. 5 Iowa vs. No. 12 Richmond (3:10 p.m., truTV): Another Big Ten team competing Thursday will be Iowa, who won the conference tournament last week to finish the season with a 26-9 record. The Hawkeyes have won nine of their last 10 games, led by First-Team All-American forward Keegan Murray, who is averaging 23.6 points per game on 55.5 percent shooting.

Richmond, meanwhile, made a surprising run in the Atlantic 10 Tournament, knocking off VCU, Dayton (the last team out of the tournament) and Davidson, a 10-seed who will take on No. 7 Michigan State on Friday. The Spiders needed to win the conference tournament to make the big dance, as even with the tournament run, Richmond still finished the regular season with a 23-12 record. The winner will play

either No. 4 Providence or No. 13 South Dakota State.

No. 5 Saint Mary's vs. No. 12 Indiana (7:20 p.m., TBS): It took a run in the Big Ten Tournament and a First Four win over Wyoming, but the 12th-ranked Hoosiers will be represented in the first round when they take on No. 5 Saint Mary's. Indiana was long thought to be on the outside of the bubble after losing its last two games of the regular season, but upsets over Michigan and Illinois in the Big Ten Tournament, as well as a well-fought contest against the eventual champions, Iowa, led to the Hoosiers sneaking into the bracket with a 20-13 record.

Saint Mary's finished the season with a 25-7 record, falling to Gonzaga in the West Coast Conference Tournament finals. The Gaels defeated the Bulldogs earlier in the season, handing Gonzaga one of just three regular-season losses. The winner will go on to face either No. 4 UCLA or No. 13 Akron in the East region.

No. 3 Tennessee vs. No. 14 Longwood (2:45 p.m., CBS): While no Big Ten team is involved in this contest, it could have implications for Ohio State if the Buckeyes can make it to the Sweet 16. If the Volunteers win, they would go on to face either Colorado State or Michigan, with the winner advancing to the Sweet 16 to face either No. 7 Ohio State, No. 10 Loyola Chicago, No. 2 Villanova or No. 15 Delaware.

Tennessee won the SEC Tournament, finishing the regular season and tournament with a 26-7 record, while the Lancers finished 26-6, winning the Big South Conference Tournament in a 79-58 blowout over Winthrop.

Here's the full schedule for Thursday's contests, with coverage set to begin at noon on CBS:

Teams	Time	Network	Odds
No. 6 Colorado State vs. No. 11 Michigan	12:15 p.m.	CBS	Michigan -2.5
No. 4 Providence vs. No. 13 South Dakota State	12:40 p.m.	truTV	Providence -1.5
No. 8 Boise State vs. No. 9 Memphis	1:45 p.m.	TNT	Memphis -2.5
No. 1 Baylor vs. No. 16 Norfolk State	2 p.m.	TBS	Baylor -20.5
No. 3 Tennessee vs. No. 14 Longwood	2:45 p.m.	CBS	Tennessee -17.5
No. 5 Iowa vs. No. 12 Richmond	3:10 p.m.	truTV	Iowa -10.5
No. 1 Gonzaga vs. No. 16 Georgia State	4:15 p.m.	TNT	Gonzaga -23.5
No. 8 North Carolina vs. No. 9 Marquette	4:30 p.m.	TBS	North Carolina -3.5
No. 5 UConn vs. No. 12 New Mexico State	6:50 p.m.	TNT	UConn -6.5
No. 2 Kentucky vs. No. 15 Saint Peter's	7:10 p.m.	CBS	Kentucky -17.5
No. 5 Saint Mary's (CA) vs. No. 12 Indiana	7:20 p.m.	TBS	Saint Mary's -3.5
No. 8 San Diego State vs. No. 9 Creighton	7:27 p.m.	truTV	SDSU -1.5
No. 4 Arkansas vs. No. 13 Vermont	9:20 p.m.	TNT	Arkansas -4.5
No. 7 Murray State vs. No. 10 San Francisco	9:40 p.m.	CBS	Murray State -1.5
No. 4 UCLA vs. No. 13 Akron	9:50 p.m.	TBS	UCLA -13.5
No. 1 Kansas vs. No. 16 Texas Southern	9:57 p.m.	truTV	Kansas -21.5