



MEN'S BASKETBALL

Postseason History

1960 NIT

Villanova 88, Titans 86

Going into the 1960 NIT — Detroit's first-ever postseason invitation — the Titans had faced Villanova five times, but had never beaten the Wildcats. Nothing would change in the sixth match-up, as Villanova escaped with a narrow, two-point victory at Madison Square Garden. Forward Charlie North poured in 33 points and All-American runningmate Dave DeBusschere added 20, but their team never came back from the 40-36 lead Villanova established by halftime. Hubert White and Richard Siminski scored 23 points apiece for Villanova, which also had future college coach George Raveling add seven points.



The 1964-65 Titans won the first-ever game in postseason history beating La Salle in the NIT

1961 NIT

Holy Cross 86, Titans 82

For the second straight season, the Titans advanced to first-round NIT action. In 1961, the Crusaders of Holy Cross brought an end to coach Bob Calihan's 18-9 season with a come-from-behind, 86-82 victory. Once again, Charlie North would lead the Titan scorers, with 30 points, while Dave DeBusschere added 18 in front of 13,238 fans at Madison Square Garden. George Blaney, who would later become the Holy Cross head coach, scored 25 for the Crusaders.

1962 NCAA

Western Kentucky 90, Titans 81

Detroit shot for the moon after two consecutive NIT berths. The Titans' 15-11 regular season record earned them a spot in the NCAA Tournament against Western Kentucky in Lexington, KY. Minus former forward partner Charlie North, All-American Dave DeBusschere nicked the Hilltoppers for two men's worth of work — 38 points (only six shy of his career high) and 19 rebounds. The "Toppers, however, responded with four players in double figures and escaped to the second round with a nine-point victory. The game was the last as a Titan for DeBusschere, the school's only three-time All-American. The Titans, however, would be back.

1965 NIT

Titans 93, La Salle 86

The Titans made their third appearance in the NIT in 1965 and collected their initial victory in post-season play. Guard Lou Hyatt paced the Titans to the first-round win over La Salle with a game-high 31 points, going 13-of-22 from the floor. John Schramm posted 15 points and 13 rebounds off the bench and Terry Page added 17 points. The Explorers countered with five players in double figures, but couldn't stop the Titans from collecting their 20th victory of the season and a berth in the NIT second round.

NYU 87, Titans 76

Against local favorite NYU in Madison Square Garden, the Titans not only duelled five men on the floor, but most of the 14,180 fans in attendance as well. At halftime, U-D trailed the Violets by 13 points, and it could do little to come closer following intermission. Forward Terry Page led the Titans with 17 points and Jim Boyce — later the head coach at Eastern Michigan — added 14. Nevertheless, it was the third time that the Bob Calihan-coached Titans had won 20 games in a season, after first turning the trick in 1950 and again in '60.



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Dick Vitale, John Long, Terry Tyler and Dennis Boyd talk to Joe Dean of TV 2 after the win over Middle Tennessee State in the NCAA Tournament.

1977 NCAA

Titans 93, Middle Tennessee State 76

There was a span of more than a decade before the Titans returned to NCAA post-season action but, when they did, they did it with flamboyance. Coach Dick Vitale's team entered the tournament with 23 wins in 26 games, and it would collect its 24th victory against Middle Tennessee State in LSU's Assembly Center. Titans center Terry Tyler picked up where Dave DeBusschere left off 15 years earlier, scoring 29 points and grabbing 15 rebounds. Junior classmate John Long added 20 points of his own. Blue Raiders center Bob Martin scored 28 points in defeat, but the Titans were on their way to a second-round showdown with the Wolverines from the University of Michigan.

Michigan 86, Titans 81

The Titans' second-round game in the 1977 Mideast Regional was played in Lexington's Rupp Arena. A minute-and-a-half into the game, Terry Tyler tipped in a missed shot to give his team a 6-2 advantage. Michigan quickly took control, however, and established as much as an 11-point lead before going into halftime up by 48-44. The Titans battled back to tie the game at 68-all in the second half but U-M, led by forward John Robinson's 25 points, held on for the victory. John Long had 25 points of his own for the Detroiters, while Tyler contributed 17 more.

1978 NIT

Titans 94, Virginia Commonwealth 86

First-round NIT action came to Detroit's Calihan Hall in 1978, and the 25-3 Titans didn't let their hometown fans down, topping Virginia Commonwealth in a game that was never close. A capacity crowd saw Terry Tyler score 19 points and Terry Duerod chip in 18 more before fouling out. John Long added 16 points and 11 rebounds for the home team.

N.C. State 84, Titans 77

In the NIT quarter-finals, the Titans were assigned to Raleigh, where they would duel Norm Sloan's North Carolina State Wolfpack. What they found was an aggressive N.C. State man-to-man defense that held center Terry Tyler to 19 points — only four in the decisive second half — and five rebounds. The game was close the entire first half, with neither team gaining more than a four-point advantage, until the Wolfpack ran off the final eight points to take a 44-38 lead into the locker room. The lead grew as high as 11 points after halftime, and the Titans could never come back. Coach "Smokey" Gaines' team was outrebounded 64-33 and, as he pointed out later, if his Titans couldn't rebound, they couldn't enjoy their trademark "Run, Press and Shoot" style, either. John Long scored 17 points to lead Detroit.

1979 NCAA

Lamar 95, Titans 87

In 1979, U-D entered NCAA play with visions of a second-round showdown against rivals Magic Johnson and Michigan State. Only one thing prevented that vision from becoming reality: Lamar. The Cardinals built a 47-41 first-half lead at the Murphy Athletic Center in Murfreesboro, TN, and never looked back. Just like that, the Titans' season and their dreams had ended. Terry Duerod scored 22 points and center Earl Cureton grabbed 11 rebounds for the Titans, but their work paled next to Lamar center Clarence Kea, who had 33 points and 19 rebounds by himself. Detroit had amassed a 47-10 record in two seasons, but Lamar was still the team which would advance to play eventual national champion Michigan State.



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Rashad Phillips celebrates after the Titans' 1998 NCAA victory over St. John's.

1998 NCAA

Titans 66, St. John's 64

A 19-year wait for a post-season invitation was rewarded with an at-large bid to play in the NCAA Tournament. Detroit Mercy — one of three MCC teams selected to play in the 1998 "Big Dance" — was seeded 10th in the Midwest and traveled to Chicago to face No. 7 St. John's at the United Center. Thanks to a 10-point run, coach Perry Watson's Titans assumed command early at 10-3, but still trailed at halftime, 34-32. After three lead changes and four ties following intermission, Detroit Mercy took the advantage for good with 13:40 to play and went on to a pulsating 66-64 victory over the Red Storm of the BIG EAST. Led by Tyrone Grant's 14 points, St. John's had five players in double figures. The Titans, on the other hand, had just one player scoring in twin digits — but what a performance he turned in. Senior guard Derrick Hayes was selected Player of the Game after recording a season-high 27

points, connecting on 10-for-14 from the field along the way. Detroit Mercy's reward for the victory was a showdown with second-seeded Purdue.

Purdue 80, Titans 65

The Titans had already beaten one Big Ten team (Michigan State) in 1997-98 and would confront Purdue brimming with confidence. However, the clutch shots which fell for Detroit Mercy two days earlier against St. John's were fewer and farther between against the Boilermakers. In fact, after forging a 5-3 lead, Detroit Mercy had to play comeback basketball the rest of the way as the Titans made just three of their first 21 shots from the floor. Purdue led 33-22 at halftime and pushed its lead as high as 22 points at 59-37. Detroit Mercy would outscore Purdue 13-4 over the next 2:25, but could draw no closer than 13 points the rest of the way. In the end, Purdue prevailed, 80-65, behind Chad Austin's 20 points. Desmond Ferguson came off the bench to fire in five three-point baskets and led the Titans with 19 points.

1999 NCAA

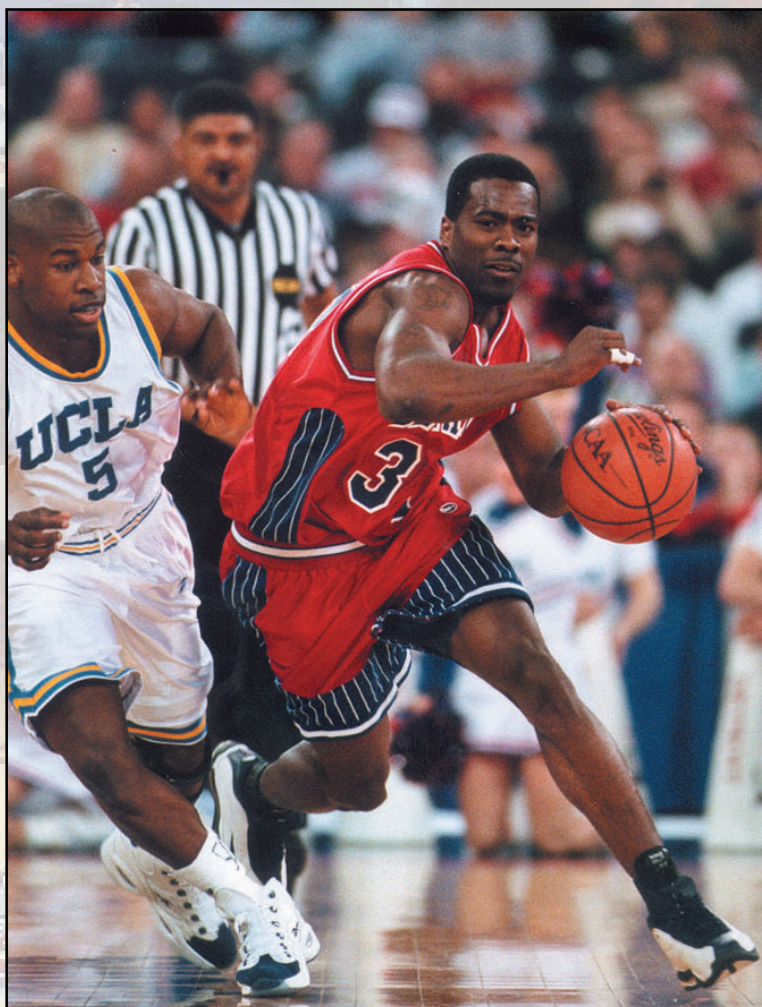
Titans 56, UCLA 53

The Detroit Mercy players set a preseason goal of returning to the NCAA Tournament and this time they didn't have to wait until "Selection Sunday" to find out if they'd receive an invitation. In 1999, they'd return to the tournament armed with an automatic bid as MCC Champions. They'd travel to a familiar city — Indianapolis, where they played Butler each season — but to a first-time venue, the RCA Dome. Seeded 12th in the South Region, they found themselves paired against still another storied opponent, 10-time national champion and nationally-ranked UCLA. The Titans led by six early, and were close at halftime, although the Bruins led, 32-30. UCLA extended its lead to six points with six minutes left, but the Titans were not to be denied. They grabbed the lead for good with 1:19 to play when guard Rashad Phillips made two free throws, and went on to a 56-53 first-round victory by holding the Bruins to their lowest offensive output of the season. Guard Jermaine Jackson led Detroit Mercy with 17 points and seven rebounds, while Phillips was close behind with 16 markers. All-American guard Baron Davis paced the UCLA with 16 points.



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Jermaine Jackson helped make it two straight years for the Titans with a NCAA Tournament victory as the Titans stunned UCLA in 1999.

Ohio State 75, Titans 44

Visions of the "Sweet 16" danced in the Titans' heads heading into a second-round meeting with Big Ten runner-up Ohio State, the South's fourth seed. However, Detroit Mercy's offense couldn't get on track early as it fell behind 12-0 after missing their first 13 attempts from the field. Detroit Mercy finally got on the scoreboard when Rashad Phillips nailed a jumper with 10:12 to play in the first half, and the Titans still clung to hope when they trailed by only 25-12 at intermission. The powerful Buckeyes steadily pulled away after halftime, though, and went on to a 75-44 victory. All-Big Ten stalwarts Michael Redd and Scoonie Penn paced OSU with 15 points apiece, while Detroit Mercy's Jermaine Jackson led all scorers with 18.

2001 NIT

Titans 68, Bradley 49

The Titans made the most of their first NIT game in 23 years, traveling to Bradley and putting a hurt on their one-time Missouri Valley Conference rivals. Detroit Mercy started slowly, making just one of its first seven shots, but it was off to the races after that. Detroit Mercy went on a 14-4 run to establish a permanent lead en route to a 19-point victory. It was Bradley's first loss in 13 home games. Rashad Phillips led the way for the Titans with 17 points and two teammates, Greg Grays (13) and Willie Green (10), joined him in double figures. Detroit Mercy's defense limited the Braves – who were playing minus their top scorer, injured guard Jerome Robinson – to just 40.0 shooting from the field.

Titans 67, Connecticut 61

Detroit Mercy caught the Huskies of the BIG EAST napping early, then held on for a 67-61 win in front of 8,889 raucous UConn fans. The Titans applied a killer punch in the first half, when they opened up a 15-point lead, but the waning minutes saw the game go up for grabs. At one juncture in the second half, Detroit Mercy's advantage slipped to one point, but guard Willie Green responded with a dunk and two free throws and the Titans were on their way to the NIT third round for the first time in history. Green finished by matching his career high of 25 points, while fellow guard Rashad Phillips threw in a game-high 26 markers. Forward Edmund Saunders led UConn with 19 points and 11 rebounds.

Titans 59, Dayton 42

Detroit Mercy used critical runs of 12-2 and 9-0 in the first half, and went on to a 17-point win at Dayton in the first meeting of the old Midwestern rivals in six years. Defense was a key for the visiting Titans, as they held the Flyers to just 32% accuracy from the field. Guard Rashad Phillips was the offensive hero for the Titans as he nailed five three-point baskets along the way to a game-high 23 points. He was the only Detroit Mercy player in double figures but the Titans did show balance in supporting him as Willie Green scored nine points, and Greg Grays and Terrell Riggs added seven apiece. Guard Tony Stanley led Dayton with 17. The victory was the Titans' 25th of the season, matching the school record.



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Alabama 74, Titans 63

The Titans got to Broadway the hard way, winning on the road three straight times and becoming just the sixth NIT semifinalist to do so (since campus game were inaugurated back in the late Seventies). Before a Madison Square Garden crowd that included Dave DeBusschere – who played in the hallowed basketball arena both as a Titan as well as an NBA star – Detroit Mercy got off to a roaring start. It built a 24-10 lead midway through the first half, and still rested on top by four points at intermission. Alabama's size advantage proved vital in the final stanza, though. The Crimson Tide slipped ahead early, then used a 10-0 run late in the game to finish off the smaller Titans. Detroit Mercy's Rashad Phillips connected on seven of his 14 three-point attempts to lead all scorers with 25 points. Erwin Dudley a 6-8 forward, paced Alabama with 20 points and 16 rebounds, while 6-8 guard Rod Grizzard added 18 points for the winners.

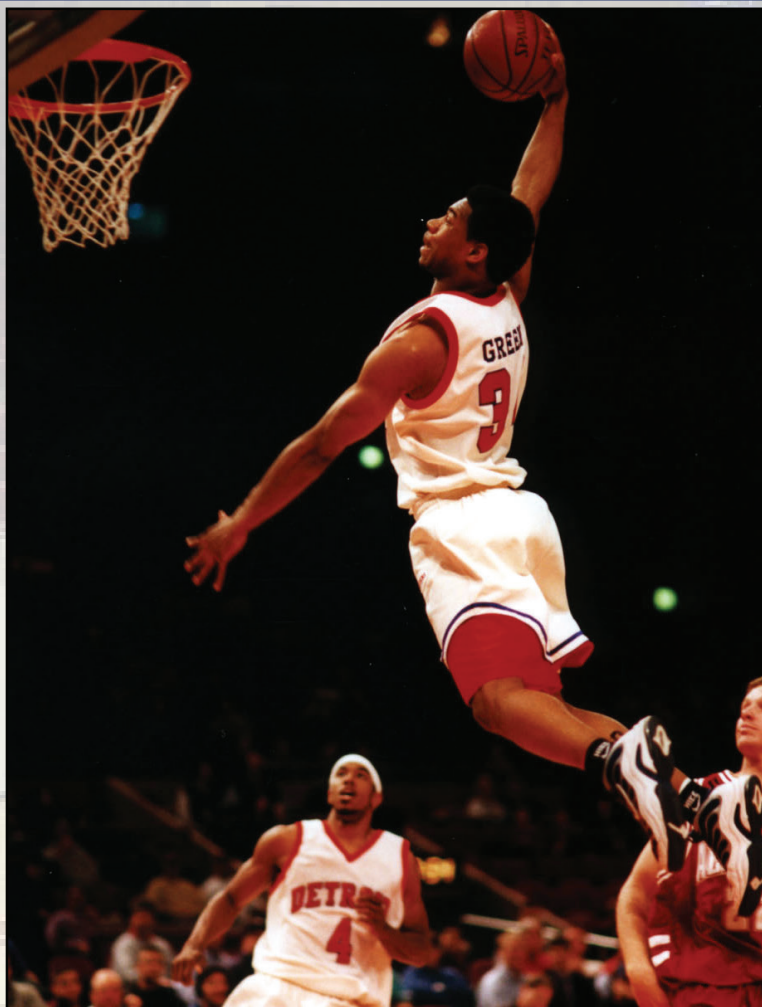
Memphis 86, Titans 71

The longest campaign in Titan history – 37 games, including a school record five alone in the postseason – would come to an end in the NIT third-place game. Unlike two nights earlier, when the Titans got out of the gates quickly, they had to play catch-up against the tall Tigers of Memphis after falling behind 9-0. Detroit Mercy actually climbed back into a tie on one occasion – at 38-all right before halftime – but could never establish a lead. A 10-0 Memphis run finally did the Titans in as they fell by 86-71. Forward Kelly Wise sparked the Tigers with 23 points. Rashad Phillips led Detroit Mercy with 27 points – breaking Spencer Haywood's school single-season scoring record in the process. He was voted to the NIT's All-Tournament Team.

2002 NIT

Dayton 80, Titans 69

The lights of Broadway beckoned the Titans a second straight year as their 18 wins and a berth in the conference tournament semi-finals earned them another NIT ticket. This time, though, UDM wasn't quite up to the trip to New York. They were assigned for a rematch of the previous year's third-round game at Dayton, and this time the Flyers were able even the score. The host Flyers pulled away by as many as 15 points in the first half, yet Detroit came back to within five, 42-37, at intermission. Dayton, however, just pulled away again with an 80-69 victory.



Willie Green skys high for a dunk against Alabama in the NIT semifinals at Madison Square Garden in New York City

Dayton's big front line made a difference as the Flyers had 44 rebounds – vs. 31 by Detroit – and 22 second-chance points. Guard Ramod Marshall led four Dayton players in double figures with 23 points. Guard Greg Grays closed out his Titan career with a game-leading 25 points, while Willie Green added 18 more.



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2012 NCAA

Kansas 65, Titans 50

The Titans were back in the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 13 years and battled the second-seeded and nationally-ranked Kansas Jayhawks, but the red, white and blue were topped Detroit 65-50 at CenturyLink Center in Nebraska. The Titans put an early scare to all the Kansas fans as the lead changed hands 10 times and the score was tied eight times in the first half. Doug Anderson's dunk with nine minutes to go in the first stanza forced a KU timeout and gave the Titans a 21-19 advantage, but the Jayhawks ended the half on a 15-3 run and then added a 19-4 spurt coming out of halftime to open a 25-point lead. Eli Holman notched his fifth double-double of the season with 10 points and 11 rebounds. Anderson led the Titans with 15 points despite fouling out with more than 11 minutes left in the game, while Ray McCallum added eight points, five rebounds, five assists and three steals. Kansas big man and Player of the Year candidate Thomas Robinson had 16 points and 13 rebounds.

2013 NIT

Arizona State 83, Titans 68

Detroit Mercy made it two-straight years with a postseason berth as the Titans earned an at-large bid into the NIT and traveled to Arizona State for a round one match-up, an 83-68 setback at Wells Fargo Arena. The Sun Devils led 46-27 at the half, before the Titans trimmed the lead to nine, 55-46, with 13 minutes left. But that was as close as the score would get as Arizona State answered back with a 25-15 run to build an 80-61 lead with two minutes remaining. Jason Calliste led Detroit Mercy with 19 points, four assists and three steals, while Ray McCallum pitched in 16 points with four steals. Doug Anderson added 12 points with three rebounds and two steals and Nick Minnerath had seven points with a team-high four boards. Jahii Carson led the Sun Devils with a game-high 22 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists, while Carrick Felix scored 21 points with seven boards.

2022 The Basketball Classic

Florida Gulf Coast 95, Titans 79

Detroit Mercy played in one of the expanded postseason tournaments in The Basketball Classic. Antoine Davis scored a team-high 24 points and DJ Harvey tallied his third double-double of the season, but a late run by Florida Gulf Coast was too much to overcome in an 95-79 setback.



Doug Anderson and the Titans put Kansas on upset alert early on in the 2012 NCAA Tournament

Harvey posted 15 points and 11 rebounds, one shy of his career-high. Kevin McAdoo scored 18 points with two assists and Madut Akec netted 17 points with nine boards.

Detroit Mercy saw Florida Gulf Coast take a 13-point lead in the first half, 37-24. The Titans answered with 12 in a row to trim it to 37-36 and would later take a 48-47 lead as McAdoo went inside for a bucket and Akec nailed a three.

In the second half, FGCU started with eight-straight points and would eventually take a 10-point lead at 64-54 with just under 13 minutes left. The Titans fought back to pull within 72-67 and later, a 3-pointer from Akec made it 76-72 with 6:34 on the clock.

That was as close as the Titans would get as the Eagles went on a 12-1 run over the next three minutes to pull away.