



For the last time this season, all 12 teams in the MAC will take the floor on the same night. The only thing decided in the MAC thus far is that Akron and Ohio will be the top two seeds. Beyond that, both division titles and playoff seeding will be up for grabs during the final week of the regular season.

The 19-game winning streak for the Akron Zips came to a screeching halt on Saturday with an 81-68 loss at Buffalo. The Zips probably could have snagged an at-large berth for March Madness had they made it to the MAC Championship Game and lost, but now, it would appear that their only ticket to the field of 68 is by winning the automatic bid. The other big upset on Saturday was Eastern Michigan's 50-49 overtime win against Western Michigan. The loss kept Western Michigan from clinching the MAC West Division as Toledo also lost, 86-72, to Ball State. Ohio beat Bowling Green 78-65, Kent State drilled Miami of Ohio by 20, and Central Michigan snapped a lengthy losing streak with a 69-50 win over Northern Illinois.

Despite the loss to Buffalo, the Akron Zips can still clinch the top seed in the MAC Tournament by beating Miami of Ohio at home on Tuesday night. The Zips have a one-game lead in the division and hold the tiebreaker over Ohio with wins in both matchups. The Redhawks could be walking into a buzzsaw at Rhodes Arena. They have lost seven straight, 11 out of 12, and are just 3-11 on the road this season. The Zips are 14-0 at home and can't be happy about that loss to Buffalo.

The Redhawks gave the Zips all they could handle back on February 9 when the Zips escaped Millett Hall with a 54-50 win. The Zips are outscoring Division I opponents at home by an average of 16 points per game this season and that number could climb if they come out

motivated on Tuesday night. The Redhawks are in a three-way tie for last in the conference with Central Michigan and Northern Illinois, so they will start on the road in the first round of the MAC Tournament.

While the Zips are trying to secure their top seed, the Western Michigan Broncos will be attempting to lock up the #3 seed for the tournament and an automatic bye to Cleveland when they take on the Ball State Cardinals. The Broncos and Toledo Rockets can still tie atop the MAC West Division, but the Rockets are ineligible for postseason play due to bad academic scores. Eastern Michigan can tie Western Michigan if the Broncos lost each of their two remaining games and the Eagles won out. With one win each in the season series, a coin flip would determine seeding.

The Broncos are 11-1 at home this season and are 5-0 at home in conference play. The Cardinals are still fighting for seeding in the middle of the pack, hoping to get a first round home game and a decent second round matchup. They have found their stride offensively all of the sudden, averaging nearly 89 points per game over their last three contests. The Broncos made just 18 shots in 45 minutes of play on Saturday against Eastern Michigan.

David will try to slay Goliath again as the Buffalo Bulls host the Ohio Bobcats. The Bobcats still have an outside shot at a MAC East Division title if Akron loses their final two games. From the looks of it, however, Ohio will probably have to settle for the #2 seed and be in line for a third meeting with Akron in the MAC Tournament Championship Game. Ohio has defeated Buffalo five straight times. The Bobcats are having trouble on the defensive end of the floor, allowing nearly 72 points per game over their last five. The Bulls continue to be an enigma, beating teams they shouldn't and losing to teams they should beat.

The Bulls are currently ranked sixth in the MAC standings because they are 0-3 against Eastern Michigan and Kent State. All three teams are tied at 7-7 in conference. Getting the fifth seed would allow for a bye to the second round, so the Bulls certainly have some motivation to keep the momentum of their win over Akron.

The Kent State Golden Flashes host Bowling Green in their final tune-up before their big date with Akron on Friday night. The Flashes, by virtue of tiebreakers, currently hold the fourth seed and the automatic bye to the quarterfinal round in Cleveland. Bowling Green, at 6-8, is seventh in the standings. That would give them at least one home game in the first round, but finishing sixth would give them two home games and a more favorable path to Cleveland.

The Flashes continue to play well, with five wins in their last six games and an overtime loss to Ohio. Over that span, they have averaged exactly 80 points per game and have shot 49 percent from the floor. Bowling Green prides itself on tough defense, so the Flashes will have to keep getting clean looks if they want to avoid an upset.

Fresh off their upset victory over their cross-state rival, the Eastern Michigan Eagles head up the road to Mount Pleasant for a matchup against the Central Michigan Chippewas. The Eagles are just 2-11 on the road this season, with both road wins coming in their last three road games. The Chips are playing just their 12th home game of the season, with 12 on the road and five at a neutral site. The Chips snapped a 10-game losing streak with their road win over Northern Illinois.

This game features two drastically different teams. The Eagles can't score and don't allow you to score while the Chippewas can score and give up points at will. The Eagles are averaging 13 points per game fewer than the Chips, while they are allowing 13 fewer points per game. Whichever team can establish the pace of this game should have the upper hand.

The Toledo Rockets should prevent Western Michigan from winning the MAC West Division title on Tuesday night when they host Northern Illinois. The Rockets cannot participate in postseason play, but can be considered the winners of the MAC West Division in the regular season. After putting together seven wins in eight games, the Rockets have dropped two straight. The Huskies are working on another long losing streak. This one is now at eight games.

The Huskies have actually dominated this season, winning seven of the last 10 meetings. The Rockets did win earlier this year in DeKalb, with a 69-64 triumph. Abdel Nader, NIU's best player, is dealing with personal matters and is listed as doubtful for the game. The Huskies are averaging just 49.6 points per game over their last five and managed just 50 against the worst defensive team in the conference in their last game.