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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**COACH GEORGE PERLES (MSU) AND COACH LLOYD CARR (U OF M)
TO SPEAK AT 4TH ANNUAL
WEST MICHIGAN SPORTS COMMISSION LUNCHEON**
Varnum Sports and Entertainment Group serves as presenting sponsor

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., February 9, 2010 – Coach George Perles, former head football coach of Michigan State University, and Coach Lloyd Carr, former head football coach of the University of Michigan will be the featured speakers at the 4th Annual West Michigan Sports Commission Luncheon on Monday, September 20, 2010.

Sports Commission Executive Committee member and former Ambassador to Italy, Peter Secchia, a personal friend to both coaches first came up with the idea of inviting both as co-speakers knowing the humorous stories each could tell from their coaching tenures and from the in-state rivalry among these BigTen schools. Given the matchup will occur a few weeks following, it should make for a fun and lively afternoon.

“We are thrilled that both Coach Carr and Coach Perles have agreed to join us in September,” said Peter Secchia. “Their memories are genuinely warm and humorous. Our guests should love these memories.”

George Perles led the Spartan football program from 1983-94 and guided the Spartans to two Big Ten titles (1987 and 1990) and seven bowl appearances in his 12 seasons. Three of his teams finished among the nation's Top 25, including the 1987 Big Ten championship team that ranked No. 8 in the final polls. Perles tutored nine first-team All-Americans and three first-team Academic All-Americans. Coach Perles also was named by the Detroit News, as a Michiganian of the Year, a select group of citizens whose achievements and contributions have had statewide impact.

Lloyd Carr led the University of Michigan to a bowl game in every season at the helm, and claimed the Big Ten title five of his last seven seasons (1997, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2004). He became the first Wolverine coach to win four straight bowl games, beating Auburn 31-28 on New Year's Day at the 2001 Florida Citrus Bowl, after leading U-M to victories in the 1998 Rose, 1999 Citrus, 2000 Orange and 2003 Outback Bowls. Carr, who reached 25 wins faster than any current Big Ten coach, became just the second Big Ten coach to post an undefeated regular season record in just his third year of head coaching (Joe Paterno went 10-0 in 1968 but was not affiliated with the conference at that time).

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This event serves as a fundraiser as well as a report back to the community and key stakeholders on the success of the West Michigan Sports Commission. In the three years since its inception, the WMSC has helped secure or support more than 130 youth and amateur sporting events, which will contribute well over \$40 million in economic impact from visitor spending in this region through the year 2015. In 2010 alone, the WMSC will welcome major events including the USGA Junior Amateur Championship, USA Judo President's Cup, and US Table Tennis - US Open.

Varnum and the Sports and Entertainment Group at Varnum have stepped up once again to serve as the presenting sponsor. The luncheon will be held in the International Ballroom of the JW Marriott Hotel. Seats are now available; a table of eight is \$500 and single tickets are \$75 per person. Reserve your table today by contacting Natalie Rose at (616) 233-3562 or nrose@westmisports.com. Luncheon information is also available online at www.WestMichiganSportsCommission.com.

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About the West Michigan Sports Commission

The West Michigan Sports Commission, a non-profit 501 (c) (3), works to identify, secure and host a diverse level of youth and amateur sporting events to make a positive impact on the economy and quality of life in the region.