The Cleveland State men's basketball team will start a three games in six days stretch this week that will determine their seeding for next month's Horizon League tournament.

"We got three tough games," said CSU coach **Gary Waters**. "This is a big weekend for us."

CSU stands at 20-3 overall and 9-2 in the Horizon League. The Vikings are in first-place in the Horizon League, a half-game ahead of Valparaiso.

On Thursday, CSU will host Valpo (16-6, 8-2 Horizon League) at 7 p.m. with first-place on the line. The Crusaders have won six of its past seven games and two of its last three meetings against CSU.

"The best team we will play (this weekend) will be here on Thursday," said Waters. "This could be for the championship."

On Saturday, CSU will face their arch-rival Butler (14-8, 6-4) at noon in a nationally televised game on ESPN2. The Vikings have lost seven of its past eight games to Butler.

On Monday, CSU will travel to Detroit (11-12, 5-6) at 7 p.m. The Vikings have only won twice in 23 games at Calihan Hall.

CSU's only two losses in league play this season have come against Butler and Valpo during consecutive road games in January.

The good news for CSU is they are undefeated at home this season (12-0) and have won 14 straight at the Wolstein Center dating back to last year.

"We have a big schedule ahead of us," said junior guard **Trevon Harmon**. "These three games are big for us. But we will take it one game at a time."

If CSU wins all three games they will be in good position to host the Horizon League Tournament next month.

"These games are very important," said Waters. "But I can't get our kids so caught up into these games that if something happened that the whole world comes to an end.

"Because it's all going to come down to the Horizon League (tournament) championship (game)."

Plenty of seats available: As of Tuesday, Waters said the presales for the Valpo game were about 3,000 tickets and the presales for the Butler game were about 4,800.

Brown redshirting: Waters announced on his weekly radio show on Tuesday that senior guard **D'Aundray Brown** is redshirting.

"We have made a decision on D'Aundray and he will sit out the remainder of this year, which is only six or seven games," said Waters. "And he will have a whole year next year."

Brown, CSU's best defender, had preseason surgery on his right index finger and hasn't played in a game this season.

Cole for POTY?: Senior guard **Norris Cole** is putting up Player of the Year type of numbers, leading the Horizon League in scoring (20.1), assists (5.2) and steals (2.4), and is 10th in rebounding (5.4).

Waters was asked this week if Cole was the best player in the league this season? "Ain't even a doubt in my mind," he said.

BracketBusters set: CSU will play at Old Dominion (17-5) at 1 p.m. on Feb. 20 in a nationally televised game on either ESPN or ESPN2.

CSU in Polls: CSU took over the top spot in the CollegeInsider.com Mid-Major Top 25 poll after St. Mary's lost at Portland last week. The Vikings received 27 of the 34 first-place votes.

The Vikings also received three points in the Associated Press poll and nine points in the ESPN/USA Today coaches' poll.

Bracketology reports: Both ESPN's **Joe Lunardi** and CBSSports.com' **Jerry Palm** have CSU in the field of 68 in their latest Bracketology reports.

Lunardi has CSU as a No. 13 seed (facing No. 4 Purdue) and Palm has the Vikings as a No. 10 seed (facing No. 7 Cincinnati).

CSU women's update: The CSU women are 12-8 overall and 5-4 in the Horizon League, tied for fourth-place with Illinois-Chicago (10-10, 5-4).

In the first half of conference play, CSU have beaten every team in the Horizon League standings who are below them and have lost to every team that is tied or above them.

"We got to start taking on the challenge of beating those teams that beat us," said CSU women's coach **Kate Peterson Abiad**. "That's how you move up in the standings.

"Our team prides itself of continually getting better so we can play our best basketball at the end of the season."

CSU opens the second-half of the conference season this week with their annual trip to Wisconsin.

The Vikings are at No. 21/16 UW-Green Bay (20-1, 9-0) on Thursday and UW-Milwaukee (7-13, 4-5) on Saturday.

News and Notes: Waters says he's in favor of the Horizon League playing games on Wednesday and Saturday rather then the current format of playing games on Thursday and Saturday.... The CSU men set a new school record winning their 20th game on Jan. 29. That is the fastest to reach that feat in school history breaking the record held by the 1985-86 team, which won their 20th game on Feb. 17.... CSU will honor the 1985-86 men's squad, which reached the Sweet 16, at halftime of the Butler game..... CSU is encouraging all fans who attend the Butler game to wear black to "Blackout Butler".... The first 1,000 fans at the Butler game receive a black CSU shirt.... The CSU women's annual Pink Zone game will be held on Feb 12. The players will wear pink uniforms that will be auctioned off after the game to raise money for the **Susan G. Koman**'s fight to cure breasts cancer.... Peterson Abiad is three games away from winning her 100th career game. She is 97-136 in eight seasons as CSU's head coach.... Former CSU standout
Cedric Jackson
is averaging 14 points, 8 assists and 7.4 rebounds in 13 games with the Idaho Stampede of the NBA Development League since being traded from the Erie BayHawks in late December. In 14 games with Erie, Jackson averaged 12.1 points, 6.6 assists and 4.1 rebounds.