Kent State will kick off the Ninth Annual ESPN BracketBuster schedule on Friday, Feb. 18 when it travels to Drexel to take on the Dragons at Daskalakis Athletic Center.

The game will tip off at 9 p.m. and is one of 11 BracketBuster games that will feature a Mid-American Conference team. It is the first game on the BracketBuster schedule and will be televised nationally on ESPN U. The BracketBuster format involves 114 teams from mid-major conferences across the country, giving them an opportunity to bolster their NCAA Tournament resumes.

Drexel is currently 14-7 overall and 6-5 in Colonial Athletic Association play. The Dragons are led by a talented trio offensively, but defense is their calling card. Chris Fouch, a 6-foot-2 sophomore guard, leads Drexel in scoring at 15.9 points per game. Fouch is the Dragons' top perimeter threat and has hoisted up 134 3-point attempts this season, connecting at 38.1%. Samme Givens, a 6-5 junior forward, averages a double-double, posting 12.0 points and 10.5

rebounds per game. Givens also shoots 52.9% from the floor. Gerald Colds, a 6-1 senior guard, rounds out the Dragons that average double figures in points, scoring at a 10.7 points per game clip while shooting 34.4% from 3-point range.

Drexel scores just 64.9 points per game, but gives up only 59.6. The Dragons also crash the boards, enjoying a +10.3 rebounding advantage per contest.

One Achilles heel is Drexel's free throw shooting, where they shoot just 64.9% as a team.

The Dragons' signature win this season came on 12/14, when they shocked then No. 20 Louisville, 52-46.

Drexel has been dominant at home, rolling up an 8-1 record this season.

The Golden Flashes currently sit tied for the MAC East lead at 14-7, 5-2).

Creighton (14-9, 6-5 Missouri Valley Conference) at Akron (12-9, 3-4)

Akron will host Creighton in its BracketBuster game Feb. 19 at a time yet to be determined. It is one of the non-ESPN televised games.

The Blue Jays have an all-time 6-2 record in BracketBuster games and recorded a quality win this season 12/11 when they defeated St. Joe's, 82-75. They are led by 6-9, 270-pound Venezuelan transfer Gregoey Echenique, who left Rutgers to come to Creighton after leading Big East freshmen in rebounds, blocks, offensive rebounds and defensive rebounds. He averages 10.6 points and 5.0 rebounds in 14 games for Creighton, and has blocked 26 shots over that span. After his senior season at St. Benedict's High School in New Jersey, ESPN rated Echenique the ninth-ranked college prospect in the nation.

Doug McDermott, a 6-7 freshman forward, leads the Blue Jays in scoring at 14.2 points per game and grabs 7.3 rebounds per contest. Antoine Young, a 6-0 junior guard, scores 13.5 points per game and hands out 4.5 assists.

Creighton's depth is a question mark, and the Blue Jays are vulnerable in the second half, being out-scored 833-794 in the final 20 minutes this season.

Miami (9-12, 4-3) at James Madison (17-6, 7-4 Colonial Athletic Association)

The RedHawks will get a look at a familiar face to MAC fans, point guard Humpty Hitchens, who transferred to JMU from Akron. Hitchens is one of five starters that have started all 23 games for the Dukes this season, a season that has seen them go 10-1 at home and defeat Kent, 60-51, in non-conference play.

The Dukes have a definite Ohio flavor, as four of their five starters are from the Buckeye State. Only leading scorer, 6-10 senior forward Denzel Bowles, is from another state…hailing from Virginia Beach.

Bowles scores at a 18.2 ppg clip and also pulls down 9 rebounds per contest. Julius Wells, a 6-5 junior forward from Toledo Libbey, scores 11 points per game while Rayshawn Goins, a 6-6 junior forward from Glenville, scores 10.6 points and grabs 7.5 rebounds. Devon Moore, a 6-4 sophomore guard from Columbus Northland, scores 10.4 games and hands out 4.3 assists while Hitchens, from Chillicothe, scores 8.4 points per game.

The Dukes have a prolific offense, scoring 73 points per game. This contest on Feb. 19 will not be televised on the ESPN family of networks.

Ohio (10-11, 3-4) at Winthrop (9-11, 5-5 Big South)

The Bobcats have a tall order, heading to Winthrop where the Eagles have lost just once this

season. Ohio last won a BracketBuster road game during the 2004-05 season when it won at Detroit, 66-65.

The Eagles are led by 6-4 sophomore guard Robbie Dreher, who scores 13.3 ppg and shoots 41.3% from 3-point range. Andre Jones, a 6-2 junior guard, scores 11.2 points per game and also shoots from beyond the arc, connecting at 35.1%.

This game will be played on Feb. 19 and will not be televised on the ESPN family of networks.

Bowling Green (10-11, 5-2) at Youngstown State (7-14, 1-10 Horizon League)

The Falcons will head to Youngstown to face the Penguins, a team that knocked off Buffalo early in the season, 64-58, before going into a tailspin. YSU has won just one of 11 conference games and gives up a ton of points, 71.8 per contest.

Vytas Sulskis leads YSU in scoring at 13.1 points and pulls down 5.5 rebounds per contest. Devonte Maymon adds 9.6 ppg whole Damian Eargle chips in 9 points and 6 rebounds. This game will be played on Feb. 20 and will not be televised on the ESPN family of networks.

Other non-televised BrackedBuster games to be played on Feb. 20 involving MAC schools:

UW-Milwaukee (Horizon) at Buffalo

Central Michigan at Niagara (MAAC)

Jacksonville State (OVC) at Eastern Michigan

Eastern Illinois (OVC) at Toledo

Seattle (Independent) at Northern Illinois

Illinois State (MVC) at Western Michigan