12/19/2005 – Week #07 – You Can't Win 'Em All

The Week In Review

After an impressive 7-0 start, the University of Michigan men's basketball team finally lost last week. They only played one game, and they lost to #14 UCLA in Crisler Arena on Saturday (12/17/2005), 68-61. It was a back-and-forth battle, with lots of runs and lead changes, but UCLA had the biggest and best run of the game, and Michigan fell into a hole that was just too deep to climb out of. The Wolverines got within 4 points (63-59) with just over 2 minutes to go, but they got a little sloppy down the stretch, and you can't do that against a good team like UCLA. It's a shame, because it was a good game, and the crowd was big and loud. It was officially listed as a sell-out, but there were a few no-shows. Still, Crisler was at least 90% full, and it was a great atmosphere. The loss drops Michigan's record to 7-1, which is still very good.

Game Statistics

Let's look at the shooting statistics from the UCLA game:

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	23-55 (41.8%)	5-23 (21.7%)	10-14 (71.4%)
UCLA	25-56 (44.6%)	10-21 (47.6%)	8-14 (57.1%)
Advantage	UCLA	UCLA	Michigan

It kind of jumps out at you, doesn't it: UCLA won the game on 3-point shooting. 47.6% is very good, and 21.7% is very bad. In fact, that's the worst 3-point shooting percentage for UM this season. They picked a bad time to have a bad shooting day.

Now, let's look at the non-shooting statistics from the UCLA game:

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	34	12	18	5	6
UCLA	35	16	16	2	11
Advantage	UCLA	UCLA	UCLA	Mich	UCLA

The game was close, and these stats are close. The only significant difference is in the Steals. Those 5 extra possessions made all the difference for UCLA.

Individual Statistics

Coach Amaker used his regular starting lineup again for the UCLA game: Lester Abram, Graham Brown, Dion Harris, Daniel Horton, and Courtney Sims. Here's how they did:

Player	Field Goals	3-Pointers	Free Throws	Points
Lester Abram	5-9	2-4	0-0	12
Graham Brown	0-0	0-0	2-2	2
Dion Harris	6-11	2-5	0-0	14
Daniel Horton	5-17	0-7	0-1	10
Courtney Sims	1-2	0-0	4-5	6
Totals	17-39 43.6%	4-16 25.0%	6-8 75.0%	44

As a group, the starters did a decent job, but the 3-point shooting stunk.

Individually, the guards all hit double figures, but the big guys had a tough time out there. Brown didn't even get a shot off, and Sims only took 2 shots. That forced Michigan to shoot from the outside, and they were off target all day. It's not a good combination. Abram and Harris shot a decent percentage, but Horton was terrible. He can, and will, play much better, but he let the team down in this game.

Here's how the bench players did in the UCLA game:

Player	Field Goals	3-Pointers	Free Throws	Points
Ron Coleman	1-5	0-2	0-0	2
Chris Hunter	5-8	1-3	4-6	15
Jevohn Shepherd	0-1	0-1	0-0	0
Jerret Smith	0-2	0-1	0-0	0
Totals	6-16 37.5%	1-7 14.3%	4-6 66.7%	17

The bench contributed very little in this game, which is not a good sign. The Wolverines are going to need some solid production from the bench once the Big Ten season starts. The only bench player who contributed was Hunter, and he was the leading scorer for UM in the game. He also shot the best percentage on the team.

This is a game where Brent Petway could have made a big difference, but he's not available until the fall term grades are posted, probably in time for the Chicago State game on 12/31/2005.

The Big Picture

Even though Michigan is no longer undefeated, it's not the end of the world, or even the end of the season. It would have been great to have beaten UCLA, and a win would probably have gotten Michigan ranked in the Top 25 again for the first time in a while, but it didn't happen. It doesn't necessarily mean that the Wolverines aren't as good as they've looked in the previous 7 games, it just means that they weren't quite good enough to beat UCLA on this particular day. They didn't look bad out there, they just didn't perform in the clutch. There are going to be plenty more opportunities for upsets this season, and Michigan will win some of them. How many will determine how much of a success the season is considered to be at the end. If they can beat the teams they should beat, and win half of the games where they're the underdog, the season will be a success.

Michigan still has 3 non-conference games left, all at home, and all against teams that they should beat. Of the three, two of them are almost certain victories, and only the game against Miami (OH) could be difficult.

Here's Michigan's entire remaining schedule:

Date	**Opponent**	**Site**
12/22/2005 (Thu)	Miami (OH)	Ann Arbor
12/28/2005 (Wed)	Coppin State	Ann Arbor
12/31/2005 (Sat)	Chicago State	Ann Arbor
01/03/2006 (Tue)	Indiana	Bloomington, IN
01/07/2006 (Sat)	Purdue	Ann Arbor
01/14/2006 (Sat)	Illinois	Champaign, IL
01/18/2006 (Wed)	Northwestern	Ann Arbor
01/21/2006 (Sat)	Minnesota	Minneapolis, MN

01/25/2006 (Wed)	Michigan State	Ann Arbor
01/28/2006 (Sat)	Wisconsin	Ann Arbor
02/01/2006 (Wed)	Penn State	State College, PA
02/04/2006 (Sat)	Iowa	Iowa City, IA
02/09/2006 (Thu)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor
02/11/2006 (Sat)	Purdue	West Lafayette, IN
02/15/2006 (Wed)	Minnesota	Ann Arbor
02/18/2006 (Sat)	Michigan State	East Lansing, MI
02/21/2006 (Tue)	Illinois	Ann Arbor
02/25/2006 (Sat)	Ohio State	Columbus, OH
03/04/2006 (Sat)	Indiana	Ann Arbor
Big Ten Tournament		
03/09/2006 (Thu)	First Round	Indianapolis, IN
03/10/2006 (Fri)	Quarterfinals	Indianapolis, IN
03/11/2006 (Sat)	Semifinals	Indianapolis, IN
03/12/2006 (Sun)	Finals	Indianapolis, IN

The Upcoming Week

Looking ahead to the upcoming week, Michigan only has one game again this week. It's on Thursday (12/22/2005) against Miami (OH). It's during UM's winter break, so most of the students will be out of town. Come on down to Crisler Arena and cheer on the Wolverines. Every little bit helps.

Go Blue!