11/27/2006 – Week #05 – Undefeated … And Untested

The Week In Review

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, and they won both of them. On Wednesday (11/22/2006), they beat Youngstown State (YSU), 65-56, then on Saturday (11/25/2006), they beat University of Maryland-Baltimore County (UMBC), 66-54. Both games were in Crisler Arena, and both games were ones that UM was expected to win. These two wins raise UM's overall record to 7-0.

Even though the scores look pretty similar, Michigan had a much easier time against YSU. They led by as many as 28 points late in the 2nd half, before YSU staged a hopeless rally against the Michigan bench players to make the score look more respectable. Against UMBC, the Wolverines trailed for much of the 1st half, and only led by 2 at halftime. UMBC led by 2 early in the 2nd half, before Michigan took control.

The team looked pretty sharp for most of the game against Youngstown State, but they looked like they had a "turkey hangover" during most of the UMBC game. Still, they played well enough to win, which is certainly important. YSU and UMBC are true "creampuffs", so there isn't much you can really tell about how good or bad UM is from these games. Michigan still hasn't played a really good team this season, but that is about to change. Read on, for details of Michigan's first real test, and first road test, of the season.

I just have to say something about the team names for YSU and UMBC. When was the last time Michigan played teams with nicknames like the Penguins (YSU) and the Retrievers (UMBC) in the same week? Also, if you think you've never heard of UMBC, you might be surprised to know that it was the school that Brian Ellerbe coached at before he came to Michigan, so you might have heard of it after all.

Game Statistics

First, let's look at the shooting statistics from the YSU game:

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	26-60 (43.3%)	6-18 (33.3%)	7-14 (50.0%)
Youngstown State	20-48 (41.7%)	2-11 (18.2%)	14-19 (73.7%)
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	YSU

It's a good thing that Michigan made 6 more baskets, and 4 more 3-pointers, because YSU hit 7 more free throws.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	34	20	14	4	6
Youngstown State	34	7	18	0	6
Advantage	Even	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Even

The final score was pretty close, and these stats show why. The 4 extra blocks and 4 less turnovers made the difference.

Moving on to the UMBC game, let's look at the shooting statistics:

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	25-54 (46.3%)	4-20 (20.0%)	12-17 (70.6%)
UMBC	20-57 (35.1%)	6-16 (37.5%)	8-9 (88.9%)
Advantage	Michigan	UMBC	UMBC

Michigan won because of the 5 extra baskets, and the 4 extra free throws, which were enough to make up for the 2 extra 3-pointers that UMBC had, and the better shooting percentages that UMBC had from the free-throw line and 3-point range.

Finally, let's look at the non-shooting statistics from the UMBC game:

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	44	17	16	11	2
UMBC	25	13	11	0	4
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	UMBC	Michigan	UMBC

The edge in Rebounds and Blocks alone account for a 14-point margin of victory.

Individual Statistics

Coach Amaker went with his regular starting lineup in both games, and here's how they did:

Player	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
	YSU	UMBC	YSU	UMBC	YSU	UMBC	YSU	UMBC
Lester Abram	5-10	2-7	3-5	1-5	0-0	0-0	13	5
Ron Coleman	3-5	3-6	1-2	1-3	1-2	2-2	8	9
Dion Harris	2-12	3-12	1-6	1-7	0-0	0-0	5	7
Brent Petway	6-8	5-7	0-0	0-0	1-2	4-5	13	14
Courtney Sims	7-11	7-12	0-0	0-0	4-6	4-8	18	18
Totals	23-46 50.0%	20-44 45.5%	5-13 38.5%	3-15 20.0%	6-10 60.0%	10-15 66.7%	57	53

As a group, the starters did OK. Their percentages are decent, except for 3-point shooting against UMBC, and they scored most of the points.

Individually, both Petway and Sims hit double figures in both games, and Coleman came close. Abram had one good game and one mediocre game, and Harris had 2 mediocre games. Harris goes into these shooting slumps a few times each season, then he snaps out of them and starts scoring again. He has always had a pretty low shooting percentage, but this week's performance was even worse than usual. He needs to snap out of it soon, because the games are going to start getting harder, soon.

Besides his regulars starters, Coach Amaker has used 6 players off the bench pretty consistently, including this week. Here's how they did:

Player	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
	YSU	UMBC	YSU	UMBC	YSU	UMBC	YSU	UMBC
Reed Baker	0-2	0-2	0-2	0-1	0-1	0-0	0	0
K'Len Morris	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Jevohn Shepherd	1-3	0-1	0-1	0-1	0-1	2-2	2	2
DeShawn Sims	0-2	0-0	0-0	0-0	1-2	0-0	1	0
Jerret Smith	1-3	3-5	1-2	1-3	0-0	0-0	3	7
Ekpe Udoh	1-4	2-2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	2	4

Totals	3-14 21.4%	5-10 50.0%	1-5 20.0%	1-5 20.0%	1-4 25.0%	2-2 100.0%	8	13

As a group, the bench players did OK. Their shooting percentages aren't great, and they didn't chip in many points, but they didn't need to.

Smith was the only bench player to do much scoring, but Shepherd and Udoh both contributed in other ways when they were out there.

The Big Picture

After playing 7 creampuffs in a row, it's time for the Wolverines to face their first real test: at North Carolina State. We'll know a lot more about the team after that game. Then, it's back to Cupcake City again for a while, until the next road game, at UCLA.

Here's the 2006-2007 schedule/results:

Date	Opponent	Site	Result	Score	Record
11/02/2006 (Thu)	Wayne State (exh)	Ann Arbor	W	85-51	0-0
11/05/2006 (Sun)	Michigan Tech (exh)	Ann Arbor	W	85-50	0-0
John Thompson Challenge					
11/10/2006 (Fri)	Central Connecticut State	Ann Arbor	W	60-40	1-0
11/11/2006 (Sat)	Davidson	Ann Arbor	W	78-68	2-0
11/12/2006 (Sun)	Eastern Michigan	Ann Arbor	W	80-51	3-0
11/15/2006 (Wed)	Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Ann Arbor	W	66-59	4-0
11/17/2006 (Fri)	Harvard	Ann Arbor	W	82-50	5-0
11/22/2006 (Wed)	Youngstown State	Ann Arbor	W	65-56	6-0
11/25/2006 (Sat)	Maryland-Baltimore County	Ann Arbor	W	66-54	7-0
ACC/Big Ten Challenge					
11/27/2006 (Mon)	North Carolina State	Raleigh, NC			
12/02/2006 (Sat)	Wofford	Ann Arbor			
12/07/2006 (Thu)	Miami (OH)	Oxford, OH			
12/09/2006 (Sat)	Delaware State	Ann Arbor			
12/16/2006 (Sat)	Northern Illinois	Ann Arbor			
12/23/2006 (Sat)	UCLA	Los Angeles, CA			
12/28/2006 (Thu)	Army	Ann Arbor			
12/30/2006 (Sat)	Georgetown	Ann Arbor			
01/03/2007 (Wed)	Illinois	Ann Arbor			
01/06/2007 (Sat)	Northwestern	Evanston, IL			
01/13/2007 (Sat)	Purdue	West Lafayette, IN			
01/17/2007 (Wed)	Penn State	Ann Arbor			
01/20/2007 (Sat)	Purdue	Ann Arbor			
01/24/2007 (Wed)	Wisconsin	Madison, WI			
01/27/2007 (Sat)	Indiana	Bloomington, IN			
01/31/2007 (Wed)	Iowa	Ann Arbor			
02/06/2007 (Tue)	Ohio State	Columbus, OH			
02/10/2007 (Sat)	Minnesota	Ann Arbor			
02/13/2007 (Tue)	Michigan State	East Lansing, MI			
02/17/2007 (Sat)	Indiana	Ann Arbor			
02/21/2007 (Wed)	Illinois	Champaign, IL			
02/24/2007 (Sat)	Minnesota	Minneapolis, MN			
02/27/2007 (Tue) or 02/28/2007 (Wed)	Michigan State	Ann Arbor			
03/03/2007 (Sat)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor			

Date	Opponent	Site	Result	Score	Record
Big Ten Tournament					
03/08/2007 (Thu)	First Round	Chicago, IL			
03/09/2007 (Fri)	Quarterfinals	Chicago, IL			
03/10/2007 (Sat)	Semifinals	Chicago, IL			
03/11/2007 (Sun)	Finals	Chicago, IL			

The Upcoming Week

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan has two games this week. On Monday (11/27/2006, 7:00 p.m.), they play at North Carolina State, then on Saturday (12/02/2006, 2:00 p.m.), they play Wofford in Crisler Arena. The Wolverines should handle Wofford easily, but the game at NC State is Michigan's first road game of the season, and their first real test. The NC State game is on ESPN2, and is part of the annual ACC-Big Ten Challenge.

NC State is currently 4-0, with wins over 2 teams that UM plays soon: Wofford (92-88) and Delaware State (63-43). NC State has some real height (a 7'3" freshman, a 6'9" player, a 6'8" player, and two 6'7" players), and 5 players averaging in double figures. This should be a good test for Michigan.

Come on out and cheer on the Wolverines on Saturday.

Go Blue!