01/22/2007 – Week #13 – Home Cooking

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 (01/17/2007), they beat Penn State (77-57), then on Saturday (01/20/2007), they beat Purdue (71-55). Both games were in Crisler Arena. The wins raise Michigan's record to 16-4 (4-1). They are currently tied for 2nd place in the Big Ten.

The Penn State game was a real confidence booster for Michigan. PSU is a solid team, but Michigan was obviously better. The Wolverines played hard against Penn State, and they played well. They never trailed, and once they built up a decent lead, they kept building on it.

The Purdue game was payback for the loss that Michigan suffered at their place last Saturday. The 1st half was close, but Michigan pulled away with a 28-10 run to start the 2nd half. Again, once they got a good lead, the Wolverines did a good job protecting it down the stretch. That's a good formula for winning games: get ahead by a comfortable margin, and keep it.

Game Statistics

Let's look at the shooting statistics from the Penn State game:

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	24-50 (48.0%)	12-21 (57.1%)	17-22 (77.3%)
Penn State	17-44 (38.6%)	4-16 (25.0%)	19-28 (57.9%)
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan

Here's where Michigan won the game: shooting from the field. Those 7 extra baskets (8 extra 3-pointers) made all the difference.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	35	19	15	3	7
Penn State	24	13	14	0	7
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	PSU	Michigan	Even

As if the shooting stats weren't enough, look at that rebounding edge. That's how you beat a team that you're supposed to beat. The rest of the stats aren't significant.

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

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	24-47 (51.1%)	8-15 (53.3%)	15-23 (65.2%)
Purdue	19-57 (33.3%)	4-18 (22.2%)	13-19 (68.4%)
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	Purdue

Compare these stats to the shooting stats for the Penn State game. They're almost identical, both offensively and defensively. Once again, it was shooting from the floor that won the game.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	35	19	14	9	5
Purdue	33	11	13	3	7
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	Purdue	Michigan	Purdue

Check it out: 24 field goals and 19 assists for 2 games in a row! Also, 9 blocks is very good. The rest of these stats are too close to matter.

Individual Statistics

Coach Amaker went with his main starting lineup again. Here's how they did:

	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
Player	PSU	Purdue	PSU	Purdue	PSU	Purdue	PSU	Purdue
Lester Abram	4-10	3-7	1-5	2-3	4-4	4-4	13	12
Ron Coleman	4-7	2-6	3-4	1-3	2-2	0-0	13	5
Dion Harris	5-11	6-10	3-6	5-7	0-0	4-5	13	21
Brent Petway	2-2	5-6	0-0	0-0	3-6	0-1	7	10
Courtney Sims	1-6	2-3	0-0	0-0	5-6	1-2	7	5
Totals	16-36 44.4%	18-32 56.3%	7-15 46.7%	8-13 61.5%	14-18 77.8%	9-12 75.0%	53	53

As a group, the starters did very well. Their percentages are good, and they scored a lot of points.

Individually, only both Abram and Harris hit double figures in both games. Coleman had a good game against Penn State, and a decent game against Purdue. Petway played hard and did his best in both games, but Sims was a no-show all week, at least offensively. He did play some good defense against Purdue's star, Carl Landry.

One of the strengths of the Michigan team this season has been its bench. While it's nice to have 4 seniors and 1 junior starting, it really helps to have 5 more players to come in and contribute. This week was no exception. Here's how the bench players did:

	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
Player	PSU	Purdue	PSU	Purdue	PSU	Purdue	PSU	Purdue
Reed Baker	2-3	0-1	2-3	0-1	2-2	0-0	8	0
Jevohn Shepherd	0-1	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	DNP	0	DNP
DeShawn Sims	0-1	1-4	0-0	0-0	0-0	1-1	0	3
Jerret Smith	3-4	4-6	3-3	0-1	0-0	3-6	9	11
Ekpe Udoh	3-5	1-4	0-0	0-0	1-2	2-4	7	4
Totals	8-14 57.1%	6-15 40.0%	5-6 83.3%	0-2 0.0%	3-4 75.0%	6-11 54.5%	24	18

As a group, the bench players did pretty well. Their shooting percentages are OK, except for 3-point shooting against Purdue, and they contributed some points.

Individually, Smith had a very good week. He scored double figures in one game, and almost did it in the other game. He also led the team in assists in both games, with 5 and 7, respectively. Baker had a good game against Penn State, but he wasn't a factor in the

Purdue game. Udoh was solid in there again, even though he didn't score as many points as usual. Sims had an "off" week, and Shepherd only played in one game, for only 2 minutes.

The Big Picture

Michigan has done pretty well so far in Big Ten play, with only one forgivable loss, at Purdue. They've played a couple road games, and managed to win one of them. Unfortunately, the schedule gets a lot harder from here on out. In particular, this week is probably the toughest week of the whole season, with 2 road games against contenders.

For the season, UM is now 14-1 in Crisler Arena, 3-0 in home Big Ten games. Unfortunately, the rest of the Big Ten is winning about 90% of their home games, and Michigan still has to play 6 more road games, including some real toughies (Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio State, Michigan State, and Illinois). The only relatively easy road game left for Michigan is at Minnesota, and Michigan doesn't have a very good record there.

So, here we are, 20 games in, and we **STILL** don't know how good or bad Michigan really is. They have won the games that they were supposed to win (most of them), lost the game that they were supposed to lose (UCLA), and lost 3 of the 4 "toss up" games so far: losses at NC State and Purdue, a home loss to Georgetown, and a home win over Illinois. The big tests are still ahead.

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	L	67-74	7-1
12/02/2006 (Sat)	Wofford	Ann Arbor	W	83-49	8-1
12/07/2006 (Thu)	Miami (OH)	Oxford, OH	W	62-56	9-1
12/09/2006 (Sat)	Delaware State	Ann Arbor	W	70-43	10-1
12/16/2006 (Sat)	Northern Illinois	Ann Arbor	W	67-52	11-1
12/23/2006 (Sat)	UCLA	Los Angeles, CA	L	92-55	11-2
12/28/2006 (Thu)	Army	Ann Arbor	W	62-50	12-2
12/30/2006 (Sat)	Georgetown	Ann Arbor	L	51-67	12-3
01/03/2007 (Wed)	Illinois	Ann Arbor	W	71-61	13-3 (1-0)
01/06/2007 (Sat)	Northwestern	Evanston, IL	W	58-46	14-3 (2-0)
01/13/2007 (Sat)	Purdue	West Lafayette, IN	L	53-67	14-4 (2-1)
01/17/2007 (Wed)	Penn State	Ann Arbor	W	77-57	15-4 (3-1)
01/20/2007 (Sat)	Purdue	Ann Arbor	W	71-55	16-4 (4-1)
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			

Date	Opponent	Site	Result	Score	Record
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			
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			

Looking a little further down the road, Michigan has a few more tough games in a row after their brutal 2 game road trip to Wisconsin and Indiana, against Iowa and Ohio State. They definitely need to beat Iowa in Ann Arbor, but they stand little chance against Ohio State in Columbus. They have a relatively easy game against Minnesota, in Ann Arbor, then they play the Feisty Farmers in East Lansing, Indiana at home, and Illinois on the road.

Assuming the games work out as expected (UM beating only Iowa and Minnesota), Michigan's record will have fallen to 18-10 (6-7). That would mean that they'll have to win at Minnesota (not always an easy task) and at home vs. Michigan State in order to get up to 20 wins. I'm writing off the home finale against Ohio State as a lost cause.

Big Ten Results

Here are the current Big Ten standings, after Week #3 of league play:

	Big Ten			Overall		
Team	Wins	Losses	Percent	Wins	Losses	Percent
Wisconsin	5	0	1.000	19	1	0.950
Ohio State	4	1	0.800	16	3	0.842
Michigan	4	1	0.800	16	4	0.800
Indiana	4	1	0.800	14	4	0.778
Michigan State	3	2	0.600	16	4	0.800
Iowa	2	3	0.400	10	9	0.526
Illinois	2	4	0.333	14	7	0.667
Purdue	2	4	0.333	13	7	0.650
Penn State	1	4	0.200	10	8	0.556
Minnesota	1	4	0.200	7	12	0.368
Northwestern	1	5	0.167	11	8	0.579

Here are the results from last week's games:

Tuesday (01/16/2007)
Iowa lost at Indiana, 71-64

Wednesday (01/17/2007)
Penn State lost at Michigan, 77-57
Illinois won at Minnesota, 64-52
Northwestern lost at Ohio State, 73-41
Purdue lost at Wisconsin, 69-64

Saturday (01/20/2007)
Purdue lost at Michigan, 71-55
Wisconsin won at Illinois, 71-64
Northwestern won at Minnesota, 55-40
Indiana won at Connecticut, 77-73 (non conference)
Michigan State won at Penn State, 91-64
Iowa lost at Ohio State, 82-63

The home teams didn't do as well this week, going 6-4. Of course, most of the road wins were pretty predictable, except for Northwestern's win at Minnesota.

Here are the games scheduled for the upcoming week:

Tuesday (01/23/2007)
Indiana at Illinois

Wednesday (01/24/2007)
Michigan at Wisconsin
Minnesota at Michigan State
Ohio State at Northwestern
Penn State at Iowa

Saturday (01/27/2007)
Michigan at Indiana
Penn State at Minnesota
Illinois at Purdue
Michigan State at Ohio State

Sunday (01/28/2007)
Wisconsin at Iowa

There are a few big games this week:

- Indiana at Illinois on Tuesday. Indiana is trying to keep pace with Wisconsin, and Illinois is trying to stay in the race, period.
- Michigan at Wisconsin on Wednesday. Wisconsin is nearly unbeatable at home, and Michigan has struggled on the road under Amaker. This would be a major upset for Michigan.
- Michigan and Indiana on Saturday. Michigan can't afford to lose both games this week, but they probably will. Indiana is also very tough at home, and Michigan hasn't won there since Tommy Amaker was in junior high.
- Michigan State at Ohio State on Saturday. Michigan State needs to win this one to stay in the race, but Ohio State may be too much for them.
- Wisconsin at Iowa. If Wisconsin wants to stay in 1st place, and stay unbeaten, they'll have to win some big road games. This is one of them.

Here are all the Big Ten results for the whole season, with the teams in alphabetical order, and the wins, losses, and remaining games in scheduled order:

Team	Record	Wins	Losses	Remaining Games
Illinois	2-4	Iowa (H) Minnesota (A)	Michigan (A) Ohio State (H) Michigan State (A)	Indiana (H) Purdue (A) Michigan State (H)

			Wisconsin (H)	Minnesota (H) Northwestern (A) Indiana (A) Northwestern (H) Michigan (H) Penn State (A) Iowa (A)
Indiana	4-1	Michigan State (H) Purdue (H) Penn State (A) Iowa (H)	Ohio State (A)	Illinois (A) Michigan (H) Wisconsin (H) Iowa (A) Illinois (H) Purdue (A) Michigan (A) Minnesota (H) Michigan State (A) Northwestern (A) Penn State (H)
Iowa	2-3	Michigan State (H) Minnesota (H)	Illinois (A) Indiana (A) Ohio State (A)	Penn State (H) Wisconsin (H) Michigan (A) Indiana (H) Minnesota (A) Wisconsin (A) Northwestern (H) Michigan State (A) Purdue (H) Penn State (A) Illinois (H)
Michigan	4-1	Illinois (H) Northwestern (A) Penn State (H) Purdue (H)	Purdue (A)	Wisconsin (A) Indiana (A) Iowa (H) Ohio State (A) Minnesota (H) Michigan State (A) Indiana (H) Illinois (A) Minnesota (A) Michigan State (H) Ohio State (H)
Michigan State	3-2	Northwestern (H) Illinois (H) Penn State (A)	Iowa (A) Indiana (A)	Minnesota (H) Ohio State (A) Illinois (A) Ohio State (H) Purdue (A) Michigan (H) Iowa (H) Wisconsin (H) Indiana (H) Michigan (A) Wisconsin (A)
Minnesota	1-4	Purdue (H)	Wisconsin (A) Iowa (A)	Michigan State (A) Penn State (H)

			Illinois (H) Northwestern (H)	Northwestern (A) Illinois (A) Iowa (H) Michigan (A) Wisconsin (H) Ohio State (H) Indiana (A) Michigan (H) Purdue (A)
Northwestern	1-5	Minnesota (A)	Penn State (A) Michigan (H) Michigan State (A) Wisconsin (H) Ohio State (A)	Ohio State (H) Minnesota (H) Wisconsin (A) Illinois (H) Penn State (H) Iowa (A) Illinois (A) Purdue (H) Indiana (H) Purdue (A)
Ohio State	4-1	Indiana (H) Illinois (A) Northwestern (H) Iowa (H)	Wisconsin (A)	Northwestern (A) Michigan State (H) Purdue (A) Michigan State (A) Michigan (H) Purdue (H) Penn State (A) Minnesota (A) Penn State (H) Wisconsin (H) Michigan (A)
Penn State	1-4	Northwestern (H)	Purdue (A) Indiana (H) Michigan (A) Michigan State (H)	Iowa (A) Minnesota (A) Purdue (H) Wisconsin (H) Northwestern (A) Ohio State (H) Wisconsin (A) Ohio State (A) Illinois (H) Iowa (H) Indiana (A)
Purdue	2-4	Penn State (H) Michigan (H)	Minnesota (A) Indiana (A) Wisconsin (A) Michigan (A)	Illinois (H) Ohio State (H) Penn State (A) Michigan State (H) Ohio State (A) Indiana (H) Iowa (A) Northwestern (A) Minnesota (H) Northwestern (H)
Wisconsin	5-0	Minnesota (H) Ohio State (H)		Michigan (H) Iowa (A)

		Northwestern (A) Purdue (H) Illinois (A)		Indiana (A) Northwestern (H) Penn State (A) Iowa (H) Minnesota (A) Penn State (H) Michigan State (A) Ohio State (A) Michigan State (H)

The teams are starting to separate into the contenders and the pretenders. At this point, Wisconsin is clearly the team to beat, but they only have a one-game lead over 3 other contenders (Ohio State, Michigan, and Indiana), and they still have some tough games left to play. Of the 3 teams tied for 2nd place, Michigan certainly has the most to prove, with only one quality win at home (Illinois), and no quality road wins. Michigan State is still in the race, but Iowa and Illinois are starting to fade. I still consider them to be "tough" opponents in the table below, but I don't consider them to be serious contenders for the Big Ten title.

Here's a breakdown of the remaining games for the contenders, in alphabetical order:

Team	Tough Games		Easy Games	
	Home	Away	Home	Away
Indiana	Michigan Wisconsin Illinois	Illinois Iowa Michigan Michigan State	Minnesota Penn State	Purdue Northwestern
Michigan	Iowa Indiana Michigan State Ohio State	Wisconsin Indiana Ohio State Michigan State Illinois	Minnesota	Minnesota
Michigan State	Ohio State Michigan Iowa Wisconsin Indiana	Ohio State Illinois Michigan Wisconsin	Minnesota	Purdue
Ohio State	Michigan State Michigan Wisconsin	Michigan State Michigan	Purdue Penn State	Northwestern Purdue Penn State Minnesota
Wisconsin	Michigan Iowa Michigan State	Iowa Indiana Michigan State Ohio State	Northwestern Penn State	Penn State Minnesota

Looking at this breakdown, it appears that Ohio State has the easiest remaining schedule, with 6 "easy" games, and only 5 "tough" games, 3 of them at home. Wisconsin and Indiana are tied for the next easiest remaining schedules, with 4 easy games and 7 tough games. Michigan State has the next easiest remaining schedule, with 2 easy games, and 9 tough games. Michigan also has 2 easy games and 9 tough games left, but their schedule is

tougher than MSU's because they have 5 of their tough games on the road, compared to 4 for MSU.

The Upcoming Week

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan has two games this week, both on the road. On Wednesday (01/24/2007, 9:00 p.m. EST), they play at Wisconsin, then on Saturday (01/27/2007, 12:00 p.m. EST) they play at Indiana. The Wisconsin game is on local TV, and the Indiana game is being nationally televised on ESPN, so tune by to see how the Wolverines do.

Go Blue!