**02/12/2007 – Week #16 – Hanging In There**

**The Week In Review**

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, and they lost on the road, and won at home. On Tuesday (02/06/2007), they lost at Ohio State (76-63), then on Saturday (02/10/2007), they beat Minnesota (82-80) in Crisler Arena. The OSU loss was their 4th in a row, but the win against Minnesota stopped that losing streak, and brought Michigan's record to 17-8 (5-5). They are currently tied for 5th place in the Big Ten. They're hanging in there in the competition for good seedings in the Big Ten Tournament, even though they're out of the race for the Big Ten regular season title.

Despite losing by 12 points, the OSU game was actually pretty encouraging. Michigan was in the game the whole way, and the team played pretty well. Watching the game, you got the feeling that OSU was toying with Michigan, and they could have countered any run that UM made to get closer than 12, but it was still encouraging to see the Wolverines play hard, and play well, in a losing cause. I know we don't like moral victories at Michigan, but this was at least a "good loss".

The Minnesota game was very exciting, although it probably shouldn't have been. Michigan is a much better team than Minnesota, but they sure didn't play like for a lot of the game. Michigan scored a quick basket off the opening tip, then didn't score again for almost 3 minutes. They fell behind early, managed to tie the game up, then fell behind again. They were down 9 at halftime (42-33), but they finally woke up in the 2nd half, and managed to pull ahead (59-57) with about 10 minutes left in the game. From that point on, they never gave up the lead, although they did let a nice 7-point lead (77-70) almost evaporate in the last minute. They made enough of their free throws down the stretch to win the game, which is the most important stat of all.

**Game Statistics**

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

| Team | Field goals | 3-Pointers | Free throws |
|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 27-56 (48.2%) | 2-6 (33.3%) | 7-12 (58.3%) |
| Ohio State | 28-57 (49.1%) | 7-16 (57.1%) | 13-15 (86.7%) |
| Advantage | Ohio State | Ohio State | Ohio State |

Here's where OSU won the game: 3-point shooting and free-throw shooting. In both categories, they made more shots than UM attempted.

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

| Team | Rebounds | Assists | Turnovers | Blocks | Steals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 29 | 10 | 9 | 2 | 2 |
| Ohio State | 32 | 13 | 8 | 13 | 4 |
| Advantage | OSU | OSU | OSU | OSU | OSU |

This is a first for this season: in every other game, Michigan has won at least one statistical category. Not this time. Most of these stats are very close, except for Blocks. 13 blocks in a game is amazing.

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

| Team | Field goals | 3-Pointers | Free throws |
|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 26-45 (57.8%) | 4-8 (50.0%) | 26-35 (74.3%) |
| Minnesota | 31-59 (52.5%) | 8-18 (44.4%) | 10-12 (83.3%) |
| Advantage | Michigan | Michigan | Minnesota |

Here's where Michigan won the game: free-throw shooting. Michigan had 16 more points at the free-throw line, which more than made up for the 5 extra baskets (4 of them 3-pointers) that Minnesota had.

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

| Team | Rebounds | Assists | Turnovers | Blocks | Steals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 29 | 18 | 15 | 5 | 4 |
| Minnesota | 22 | 13 | 9 | 5 | 2 |
| Advantage | Michigan | Michigan | Minnesota | Even | Michigan |

These stats are all pretty close, except for Rebounds, which Michigan won, and Turnovers, which Minnesota won.

**Individual Statistics**

Brent Petway injured his knee in the Iowa game, so Coach Amaker replaced him with Ekpe Udoh in the starting lineup for the OSU game. Petway did play a couple minutes against OSU, and he was back in the starting lineup for the Minnesota game. Here's how the starters did this week:

| | Field Goals | | 3-Pointers | | Free Throws | | Points | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Player | OSU | Minn | OSU | Minn | OSU | Minn | OSU | Minn |
| Lester Abram | 2-8 | 4-8 | 0-2 | 0-2 | 2-2 | 3-7 | 6 | 11 |
| Ron Coleman | 2-3 | 4-6 | 0-0 | 2-3 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 4 | 10 |
| Dion Harris | 6-11 | 8-10 | 2-3 | 2-3 | 0-0 | 9-10 | 14 | 27 |
| Brent Petway | Bench | 7-9 | Bench | 0-0 | Bench | 4-5 | Bench | 18 |
| Courtney Sims | 8-14 | 2-6 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 1-2 | 4-4 | 17 | 8 |
| Ekpe Udoh | 7-10 | Bench | 0-0 | Bench | 0-0 | Bench | 14 | Bench |
| Totals | 25-46 54.3% | 25-39 64.1% | 2-5 40.0% | 4-8 50.0% | 3-4 75.0% | 20-26 76.9% | 55 | 74 |

As a group, the starters had a good week. Their percentages are good, they just didn't score enough points in the OSU game.

Individually, Harris had a great week. After the way he stunk the joint up in the Iowa game, it was great to see him come back strong in two consecutive games. Sims came close to hitting double figures in both games. Abram and Coleman both had good games against Minnesota, but didn't do much against OSU. The biggest story this week was Petway; after only playing a couple minutes at OSU, he had the best game of his career against Minnesota, scoring a career-high 18 points. Udoh also had a career-high in points against OSU, in his only start this week.

Here's how the bench players did this week:

| | Field Goals | | 3-Pointers | | Free Throws | | Points | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Player | OSU | Minn | OSU | Minn | OSU | Minn | OSU | Minn |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reed Baker | 1-3 | DNP | 0-1 | DNP | 0-0 | DNP | 2 | DNP |
| Jevohn Shepherd | 0-3 | 1-1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 1-4 | 2-5 | 1 | 4 |
| DeShawn Sims | 1-4 | 0-4 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 3-4 | 0-0 | 5 | 0 |
| Jerret Smith | DNP | 0-0 | DNP | 0-0 | DNP | 4-4 | DNP | 4 |
| Brent Petway | 0-0 | Starter | 0-0 | Starter | 0-0 | Starter | 0 | Starter |
| Ekpe Udoh | Starter | 0-1 | Starter | 0-0 | Starter | 0-0 | Starter | 0 |
| Totals | 2-10<br>20.0% | 1-6<br>16.7% | 0-1<br>0.0% | 0-0<br>0.0% | 4-8<br>50.0% | 6-9<br>66.7% | 8 | 8 |

As a group, and individually, the bench players didn't contribute much, with one exception: he may have only had 4 points against Minnesota, but Smith was a one of the big reasons that Michigan won. He played 25 minutes at point guard, freeing Harris up to play more shooting guard, where he scored 27 points. Smith had 6 assists, and only 3 turnovers.

**The Big Picture**

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 | L | 58-71 | 16-5 (4-2) |
| 01/27/2007 (Sat) | Indiana | Bloomington, IN | L | 61-76 | 16-6 (4-3) |
| 01/31/2007 (Wed) | Iowa | Ann Arbor | L | 62-69 | 16-7 (4-4) |
| 02/06/2007 (Tue) | Ohio State | Columbus, OH | L | 63-76 | 16-8 (4-5) |
| 02/10/2007 (Sat) | Minnesota | Ann Arbor | W | 82-80 | 17-8 (5-5) |
| 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)<br>or<br>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 | | | |

That 4-game losing streak really hurt Michigan's chances of going to the NCAA Tournament. While it's nice that they stopped the streak by beating Minnesota, that was a game that they were expected to win. The cold hard truth is that Michigan has only won one game that they probably weren't expected to win (Illinois on 01/03/2007), and they've pretty much just won the games that they were supposed to win, and lost the games that they were supposed to lose. The only other exception was the game they lost to Iowa on 01/31/2007, which they should have won.

So, now the Wolverines find themselves with a 17-8 record, and 6 games left to play in the regular season. Of those games, 3 of them are on the road, and 3 of them are at home. Two of the road games (at MSU and at Illinois) will be very tough to win, but Michigan should be able to beat Minnesota, even in "The Barn". All three of the remaining home games will be tough, especially the finale against Ohio State. Somehow, Michigan has to figure out a way to beat Minnesota on the road, and Indiana and Michigan State in Crisler, to get up to the magic 20-win mark. Even then, UM probably has to win at least one game in the Big Ten Tournament to get into the NCAA Tournament.

**Big Ten Results**

Here are the current Big Ten standings, after Week #6 of league play:

| | Big Ten | | | Overall | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Team | Wins | Losses | Percent | Wins | Losses | Percent |
| Wisconsin | 10 | 1 | 0.909 | 24 | 2 | 0.923 |
| Ohio State | 10 | 1 | 0.909 | 22 | 3 | 0.880 |
| Indiana | 7 | 3 | 0.700 | 17 | 6 | 0.739 |
| Iowa | 6 | 5 | 0.545 | 14 | 11 | 0.560 |
| Michigan | 5 | 5 | 0.500 | 17 | 8 | 0.680 |
| Illinois | 6 | 6 | 0.500 | 18 | 9 | 0.667 |
| Purdue | 5 | 6 | 0.454 | 16 | 9 | 0.640 |
| Michigan State | 4 | 6 | 0.400 | 17 | 8 | 0.680 |
| Minnesota | 3 | 8 | 0.333 | 9 | 16 | 0.360 |
| Northwestern | 2 | 9 | 0.181 | 12 | 12 | 0.500 |
| Penn State | 1 | 9 | 0.100 | 10 | 13 | 0.435 |

Here are the results from last week's games:

Tuesday (02/06/2007)
Michigan lost at Ohio State, 76-63

Wednesday (02/07/2007)
Illinois won at Northwestern, 58-43
Iowa won at Minnesota, 91-78
Michigan State lost at Purdue, 62-38
Wisconsin won at Penn State, 71-58

Saturday (02/10/2007)
Minnesota lost at Michigan, 82-80
Purdue lost at Ohio State, 63-56
Illinois lost at Indiana, 65-61
Iowa lost at Wisconsin, 74-62
Penn State lost at Northwestern, 53-51

Wednesday was a very bad day for the home teams, with 3 out of 4 of them losing. However, the rest of the week was back to normal, with the home teams winning all 6 of the games. The big upset this week was Michigan State getting blown out at Purdue. Given Purdue's record at home this season, it wasn't too surprising that they beat MSU, but the margin of victory (24 points) was impressive, and so was the losing point total for MSU (38 points, only 12 in the 2nd half).

Here are the games scheduled for the upcoming week:

Tuesday (02/13/2007)
Michigan at Michigan State

Wednesday (02/14/2007)
Indiana at Purdue
Ohio State at Penn State
Wisconsin at Minnesota
Northwestern at Iowa

Saturday (02/17/2007)
Indiana at Michigan
Penn State at Wisconsin
Iowa at Michigan State

Sunday (02/18/2007)
Ohio State at Minnesota
Northwestern at Illinois

There are a few big games this week:

- Michigan at Michigan State on Tuesday. This is always a big game. Both teams are out of the Big Ten race, but they're still jockeying for position in the Big Ten Tournament.
- Indiana at Michigan on Saturday. If Michigan wants to stand any chance of going to the NCAA Tournament, they need to win this game. Period.
- Iowa at Michigan State on Saturday. Another game between teams in the middle of the pack, fighting for seedings in the Big Ten Tournament, and wins to help their cause for at-large berths in the Big Dance.

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 | 6-6 | Iowa (H)<br>Minnesota (A)<br>Indiana (H)<br>Michigan State (H)<br>Minnesota (H)<br>Northwestern (A) | Michigan (A)<br>Ohio State (H)<br>Michigan State (A)<br>Wisconsin (H)<br>Purdue (A)<br>Indiana (A) | Northwestern (H)<br>Michigan (H)<br>Penn State (A)<br>Iowa (A) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Indiana | 7-3 | Michigan State (H)<br>Purdue (H)<br>Penn State (A)<br>Iowa (H)<br>Michigan (H)<br>Wisconsin (H)<br>Illinois (H) | Ohio State (A)<br>Illinois (A)<br>Iowa (A) | Purdue (A)<br>Michigan (A)<br>Minnesota (H)<br>Michigan State (A)<br>Northwestern (A)<br>Penn State (H) |
| Iowa | 6-5 | Michigan State (H)<br>Minnesota (H)<br>Penn State (H)<br>Michigan (A)<br>Indiana (H)<br>Minnesota (A) | Illinois (A)<br>Indiana (A)<br>Ohio State (A)<br>Wisconsin (H)<br>Wisconsin (A) | Northwestern (H)<br>Michigan State (A)<br>Purdue (H)<br>Penn State (A)<br>Illinois (H) |
| Michigan | 5-5 | Illinois (H)<br>Northwestern (A)<br>Penn State (H)<br>Purdue (H)<br>Minnesota (H) | Purdue (A)<br>Wisconsin (A)<br>Indiana (A)<br>Iowa (H)<br>Ohio State (A) | Michigan State (A)<br>Indiana (H)<br>Illinois (A)<br>Minnesota (A)<br>Michigan State (H)<br>Ohio State (H) |
| Michigan State | 4-6 | Northwestern (H)<br>Illinois (H)<br>Penn State (A)<br>Minnesota (H) | Iowa (A)<br>Indiana (A)<br>Ohio State (A)<br>Illinois (A)<br>Ohio State (H)<br>Purdue (A) | Michigan (H)<br>Iowa (H)<br>Wisconsin (H)<br>Indiana (H)<br>Michigan (A)<br>Wisconsin (A) |
| Minnesota | 3-8 | Purdue (H)<br>Penn State (H)<br>Northwestern (A) | Wisconsin (A)<br>Iowa (A)<br>Illinois (H)<br>Northwestern (H)<br>Michigan State (A)<br>Illinois (A)<br>Iowa (H)<br>Michigan (A) | Wisconsin (H)<br>Ohio State (H)<br>Indiana (A)<br>Michigan (H)<br>Purdue (A) |
| Northwestern | 2-9 | Minnesota (A)<br>Penn State (H) | Penn State (A)<br>Michigan (H)<br>Michigan State (A)<br>Wisconsin (H)<br>Ohio State (A)<br>Ohio State (H)<br>Minnesota (H)<br>Wisconsin (A)<br>Illinois (H) | Iowa (A)<br>Illinois (A)<br>Purdue (H)<br>Indiana (H)<br>Purdue (A) |
| Ohio State | 10-1 | Indiana (H)<br>Illinois (A)<br>Northwestern (H)<br>Iowa (H)<br>Northwestern (A)<br>Michigan State (H)<br>Purdue (A)<br>Michigan State (A)<br>Michigan (H)<br>Purdue (H) | Wisconsin (A) | Penn State (A)<br>Minnesota (A)<br>Penn State (H)<br>Wisconsin (H)<br>Michigan (A) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Penn State | 1-9 | Northwestern (H) | Purdue (A)<br>Indiana (H)<br>Michigan (A)<br>Michigan State (H)<br>Iowa (A)<br>Minnesota (A)<br>Purdue (H)<br>Wisconsin (H)<br>Northwestern (A) | Ohio State (H)<br>Wisconsin (A)<br>Ohio State (A)<br>Illinois (H)<br>Iowa (H)<br>Indiana (A) |
| Purdue | 5-6 | Penn State (H)<br>Michigan (H)<br>Illinois (H)<br>Penn State (A)<br>Michigan State (H) | Minnesota (A)<br>Indiana (A)<br>Wisconsin (A)<br>Michigan (A)<br>Ohio State (H)<br>Ohio State (A) | Indiana (H)<br>Iowa (A)<br>Northwestern (A)<br>Minnesota (H)<br>Northwestern (H) |
| Wisconsin | 10-1 | Minnesota (H)<br>Ohio State (H)<br>Northwestern (A)<br>Purdue (H)<br>Illinois (A)<br>Michigan (H)<br>Iowa (A)<br>Northwestern (H)<br>Penn State (A)<br>Iowa (H) | Indiana (A) | Minnesota (A)<br>Penn State (H)<br>Michigan State (A)<br>Ohio State (A)<br>Michigan State (H) |

There are really only 2 contenders left for the Big Ten championship: Ohio State and Wisconsin. Everyone else is out of the race, except maybe Indiana, so I'll leave them in, for now.

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

| | Tough Games | | Easy Games | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Team | Home | Away | Home | Away |
| Indiana | | Michigan<br>Michigan State | Minnesota<br>Penn State | Purdue<br>Northwestern |
| Ohio State | Wisconsin | Michigan | Penn State | Penn State<br>Minnesota |
| Wisconsin | Michigan State | Michigan State<br>Ohio State | Penn State | Minnesota |

Looking at this breakdown, it appears that Ohio State still has the easiest remaining schedule, with 3 "easy" games, and only 2 "tough" games. Indiana is right behind them with the next easiest remaining schedule, with 4 easy games and 2 tough games. Wisconsin has the hardest remaining schedule, with 2 easy games and 3 tough ones.

**The Upcoming Week**

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan has two games this week. On Tuesday (02/13/2007, 9:00 p.m.), they play at Michigan State, then on Saturday (02/17/2007, 4:00 p.m.), they play Indiana in Crisler Arena. The Michigan State game is on ESPN, so tune in and come on down and cheer on the Wolverines.

Go Blue!