12/10/2007 – Week #07 – Blown Away

The Week In Review

The University of Michigan men's basketball team only played one game this week, but it was a tough one: on Saturday (12/08/2007), Michigan lost at (#6) Duke, 95-67. The loss lowers Michigan's record to 3-6. After winning the first two games, Michigan has now lost 6 of their last 7 games, including the last 4 in a row.

I don't think anyone expected Michigan to be able to beat Duke, especially in Cameron Indoor Stadium, but I was hoping that the game would be a little closer. Actually, the game was close for the first 12 minutes, with Duke ahead just 18-14. Then Duke went on a 14-0 run, and the game was never close again. Duke just had way too many quality players for UM to keep up with.

I haven't dwelled on it much, but Michigan sure looks weary. There was a good article about this in the Saturday "Ann Arbor News". The article pointed out that in the last 23 days, UM has flown 8,668 miles, and played 6 of their last 7 games on the road, two of them against Top 10 teams (#5 Georgetown and #6 Duke). It's hard to tell how much of the current losing streak to blame on the schedule.

Game Statistics

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

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	25-66 (37.9%)	6-19 (31.6%)	11-15 (73.3%)
Duke	37-75 (49.3%)	11-27 (40.7%)	10-14 (71.4%)
Advantage	Duke	Duke	Michigan

Look, look: Michigan won one of the stats this week. They shot free throws better than Duke. Of course, the one extra point wasn't quite enough to make up for the 12 extra baskets Duke put in, including 5 more 3-pointers.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	41	11	15	6	3
Duke	43	19	8	3	7
Advantage	Duke	Duke	Duke	Michigan	Duke

Look, look: Michigan won another stat category. They had twice as many blocks as Duke had, and they just barely got out-rebounded. But, the 7 extra turnovers, and the 4 extra steals were all Duke needed.

Season 3-Point Shooting

Here's my theory: Michigan should win a game if they can shoot at least 20 3-pointers, and hit at least 40% of them. If they don't shoot 20, and make 40%, they lose. Of course, they can still win the game when they shoot less than 20 3-pointers, or when they hit less than 40% of them. I'm just saying that they should win the game if they do shoot 20 and make 40%. Let's see how they that works this season:

Date	Opponent	3-Point Shooting	Result	Fits Theory?

Date	Opponent	3-Point Shooting	Result	Fits Theory?
11/09/2007	Radford	7-23 (30.4%)	W	N/A
11/11/2007	Brown	12-24 (50.0%)	W	Yes
11/15/2007	At Georgetown	5-18 (27.8%)	L	Yes
11/21/2007	Butler (neutral site)	8-20 (40.0%)	L	No
11/23/2007	Eastern Washington (neutral site)	10-27 (37.0%)	W	N/A
11/24/2007	Western Kentucky (neutral site)	5-17 (29.4%)	L	Yes
11/28/2007	Boston College	9-25 (36.0%)	L	Yes
12/01/2007	At Harvard	5-20 (25.0%)	L	Yes
12/08/2007	At Duke	6-19 (31.6%)	L	Yes
Totals		60-170 (35.3%)		6-1

So far, my theory is holding up OK. Michigan has only lost one game (Butler) where they did shoot 40%, and take 20 shots. They have won two games (Radford and EWU) when they didn't shoot at least 40%.

Individual Statistics

Coach Beilein altered his regular starting lineup. He started Ekpe Udoh in place of Zack Gibson. Here's how the starters did:

Player	Field Goals	3-Pointers	Free Throws	Points
Ron Coleman	1-5	1-4	1-2	4
Kelvin Grady	3-7	1-2	2-2	9
Manny Harris	2-9	0-1	4-4	8
DeShawn Sims	5-11	1-1	1-2	12
Ekpe Udoh	4-9	0-1	0-0	8
Totals	15-41 36.6%	3-9 33.3%	8-10 80.0%	41

As a group, the starters didn't do very well. Their percentages are weak, except for free throw shooting, and they didn't score very many points.

Individually, only Sims hit double figures, although Grady, Harris, and Udoh all came close. Udoh deserves recognition for his 10 rebounds and 4 blocked shots.

Since the game was a blowout for the entire 2nd half, Coach Beilein played more bench players than usual. However, you'll notice one prominent bench player missing: Jerret Smith didn't make the trip, as he works on some academic issues.

Here's how the bench players did:

Player	Field Goals	3-Pointers	Free Throws	Points
Adam Block	0-0	0-0	0-0	0
Zack Gibson	4-8	1-2	2-3	11
C.J. Lee	1-4	0-2	0-0	2
David Merritt	0-0	0-0	0-0	0
K'Len Morris	2-6	1-3	0-0	5
Jevohn Shepherd	2-4	1-2	1-2	6
Anthony Wright	1-3	0-1	0-0	2
Totals	10-25 40.0%	3-10 30.0%	3-5 60.0%	26

As a group, the bench players did pretty well. Their shooting percentages are decent, and they chipped in some points.

Individually, only Gibson had a decent game.

The Big Picture

This season isn't on the brink yet, but it sure is heading that way. Of the 6 losses suffered so far, 3 of them have been very understandable, to Top-25 teams (Georgetown, Butler, and Duke). However, 2 of the other 3 losses have been "toss up" games (Western Kentucky and Boston College), and the other loss was one that UM should have won (Harvard).

The good news is that the next 4 games are all at home, so the team can recover from all the traveling they've done lately. The bad news is that 2 of those 4 games are against very good teams. After 2 fairly winnable games (Oakland and Central Michigan), Michigan faces (#7) UCLA and almost-ranked Wisconsin. This season has got "rebuilding year" written all over it.

Here's the 2007-2008 schedule/results:

Date	Opponent	Site	Result	Score	Record
11/01/2007 (Thu)	Ferris State (exhibition)	Ann Arbor	W	78-40	0-0
11/09/2007 (Fri)	Radford	Ann Arbor	W	82-55	1-0
11/11/2007 (Sun)	Brown	Ann Arbor	W	72-57	2-0
11/15/2007 (Thu)	Georgetown	Washington, D.C.	L	74-52	2-1
Carrs/Safeway Great Alaska Shootout					
11/21/2007 (Wed)	Butler	Anchorage, Alaska	L	79-65	2-2
11/23/2007 (Fri)	Eastern Washington	Anchorage, Alaska	W	61-53	3-2
11/24/2007 (Sat)	Western Kentucky	Anchorage, Alaska	L	73-69	3-3
ACC/Big Ten Challenge					
11/28/2007 (Wed)	Boston College	Ann Arbor	L	77-64	3-4
12/01/2007 (Sat)	Harvard	Boston, Mass.	L	62-51	3-5
12/08/2007 (Sat)	Duke	Durham, N.C.	L	95-67	3-6
12/12/2007 (Wed)	Oakland	Ann Arbor			
12/15/2007 (Sat)	Central Michigan	Ann Arbor			
12/22/2007 (Sat)	UCLA	Ann Arbor			
01/02/2008 (Wed)	Wisconsin	Ann Arbor			
01/05/2008 (Sat)	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.			
01/08/2008 (Tue)	Indiana	Ann Arbor			
01/12/2008 (Sat)	Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.			
01/16/2008 (Wed)	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.			
01/19/2008 (Sat)	Iowa	Ann Arbor			
01/22/2008 (Tue)	Wisconsin	Madison, Wis.			
01/27/2008 (Sun)	Michigan State	East Lansing, Mich.			
01/31/2008 (Thu)	Minnesota	Ann Arbor			
02/05/2008 (Tue)	Ohio State	Columbus, Ohio			
02/09/2008 (Sat)	Penn State	Ann Arbor			
02/14/2008 (Thu)	Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa			
02/17/2008 (Sun)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor			
02/21/2008 (Thu)	Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minn.			
02/23/2008 (Sat) or 02/24/2008 (Sun)	Illinois	Ann Arbor			
02/26/2008 (Tue)	Northwestern	Ann Arbor			

Date	Opponent	Site	Result	Score	Record
03/01/2008 (Sat)	Penn State	State College, Pa.			
03/08/2008 (Sat) or 03/09/2008 (Sun)	Purdue	Ann Arbor			
Big Ten Tournament					
03/13/2008 (Thu)	First Round	Indianapolis, Ind.			
03/14/2008 (Fri)	Quarterfinal	Indianapolis, Ind.			
03/15/2008 (Sat)	Semifinal	Indianapolis, Ind.			
03/16/2008 (Sun)	Championship	Indianapolis, Ind.			

The Upcoming Week

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan has two games this week. On Wednesday (12/12/2007, 7:00 p.m.), they play Oakland, then on Saturday (12/15/2007, 2:00 p.m.), they play Central Michigan. Both games are in Crisler Arena, and both games are very winnable, so come on down and cheer on the Wolverines, then check back here next week to see what happened, and why.

Go Blue!