03/17/2008 – Week #21 – A Merciful End To A Long Season

The Week In Review

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games last week in the Big Ten Tournament, and they won one and lost one. On Thursday (03/13/2008), they beat Iowa, 55-47, then on Friday (03/14/2008), they lost to (#8) Wisconsin, 51-34. The win and the loss leave Michigan with a final record of 10-22, 5-13 in the Big Ten. Since they finished well below 0.500, they aren't eligible for the NIT, and they certainly don't deserve an at-large berth in the NCAA Tournament, so they're done for this season.

Both games were low scoring, especially the Wisconsin mess. Both games featured more long stretches where Michigan couldn't buy a basket, or even a point. Amazingly, Michigan went for more than 10 minutes without a point in the 2nd half of the Iowa game, yet their lead only went from 15 points (44-29) to 8 points (44-36), before they finally started scoring again.

Michigan had two shorter scoreless stretches (only about 4 minutes each) in the 2nd half of the Wisconsin game, but they were enough to put the game out of reach. Michigan's 34 points set a record for the fewest points scored by one team in Big Ten Tournament history. It was a miserable game.

Game Statistics

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

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	19-51 (37.3%)	8-24 (33.3%)	9-12 (75.0%)
Iowa	15-47 (31.9%)	2-17 (11.8%)	15-23 (65.2%)
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan

Michigan dominated these stats, and that's why they won the game. Michigan didn't shoot particularly well, but Iowa was just terrible, especially shooting 3-pointers.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	31	11	12	7	6
Iowa	38	4	15	2	5
Advantage	Iowa	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan

Iowa won the rebounding battle by 7, but they away almost half of them with +3 turnovers. The important stat in this game was 3-point shooting.

Next, let's look at the shooting statistics from the Wisconsin game:

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	10-50 (20.0%)	6-24 (25.0%)	8-12 (66.7%)
Wisconsin	17-50 (34.0%)	3-11 (27.3%)	14-17 (82.4%)
Advantage	Wisconsin	Wisconsin	Wisconsin

This is a no-brainer: Michigan shot poorly, and Wisconsin shot better across the board.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	35	8	14	4	4
Wisconsin	42	8	11	4	8
Advantage	Wisconsin	Even	Wisconsin	Even	Wisconsin

It was a clean sweep: Wisconsin either won or tied every stat. No contest.

It's embarrassing that Michigan had more rebounds than points, and more turnovers than baskets.

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. 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?
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
12/12/2007	Oakland	7-17 (41.2%)	W	N/A
12/15/2007	Central Michigan	4-8 (50.0%)	L	Yes
12/22/2007	UCLA	6-31 (19.4%)	L	Yes
01/02/2008	Wisconsin	5-18 (27.8%)	L	Yes
01/05/2008	At Purdue	4-18 (22.2%)	L	Yes
01/08/2008	Indiana	8-28 (28.6%)	L	Yes
01/12/2008	At Northwestern	8-26 (30.8%)	W	N/A
01/16/2008	At Illinois	8-27 (29.6%)	L	Yes
01/19/2008	Iowa	11-28 (39.3%)	L	Yes
01/22/2008	At Wisconsin	7-21 (33.3%)	L	Yes
01/27/2008	At Michigan State	8-31 (25.8%)	L	Yes
01/31/2008	Minnesota	6-25 (24.0%)	L	Yes
02/05/2008	At Ohio State	9-26 (34.6%)	L	Yes
02/09/2008	Penn State	6-18 (33.3%)	W	N/A
02/14/2008	At Iowa	7-19 (36.8%)	W	N/A
02/17/2008	Ohio State	10-24 (41.7%)	W	Yes
02/21/2008	At Minnesota	5-26 (19.2%)	L	Yes
02/23/2008	Illinois	5-21 (23.8%)	W	N/A
02/26/2008	Northwestern	7-21 (33.3%)	L	Yes
03/01/2008	At Penn State	9-31 (29.0%)	L	Yes
03/09/2008	Purdue	7-26 (26.9%)	L	Yes
03/13/2008	Iowa (neutral site)	8-24 (33.3%)	W	N/A

Date	Opponent	3-Point Shooting	Result	Fits Theory?
03/14/2008	Wisconsin (neutral site)	6-24 (25.0%)	L	Yes
Totals		228-731 (31.2%)		23-1

The theory held true for almost every game this season. The loss to Butler in the Great Alaska Shootout was the only game where UM shot at least 20 3-pointers, and made at least 40%, yet still lost.

Individual Statistics

Coach Beilein went with his latest starting lineup in both games.

Here's how the starters did:

	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
Player	Iowa	Wisc	Iowa	Wisc	Iowa	Wisc	Iowa	Wisc
Kelvin Grady	1-3	0-2	1-2	0-2	1-3	0-0	4	0
Manny Harris	6-15	1-12	2-4	1-5	5-6	1-2	19	4
DeShawn Sims	5-10	2-10	2-5	0-2	2-2	2-2	14	6
Ekpe Udoh	1-4	0-4	0-0	0-0	0-0	2-3	2	2
Anthony Wright	3-9	4-10	3-8	3-9	0-0	0-1	9	11
Totals	16-41 39.0%	7-38 18.4%	8-19 42.1%	4-18 22.2%	8-11 72.7%	5-8 62.5%	48	23

As a group, the starters had a lousy week. Most of their percentages are mediocre, except 3-point shooting in the Iowa game, and they didn't contribute many points, especially against Wisconsin.

Individually, none of the starters hit double figures in both games. Harris and Sims both played well against Iowa, but they both had a rough time against Wisconsin. Only Wright came close to double figures in both games. Udoh and Grady were both worthless out there offensively.

Coach Beilein went 6-deep on the bench in the Wisconsin game, but only because he put freshman Adam Block in during the last few minutes.

Here's how the bench players did:

	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
Player	Iowa	Wisc	Iowa	Wisc	Iowa	Wisc	Iowa	Wisc
Adam Block	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	DNP	0
Ron Coleman	0-2	0-1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Zack Gibson	2-5	3-7	0-2	2-4	1-1	1-2	5	9
C.J. Lee	1-2	0-3	0-1	0-2	0-0	0-0	2	0
David Merritt	0-1	0-1	0-1	0-0	0-0	2-2	0	2
Jevohn Shepherd	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Totals	3-10 30.0%	3-12 25.0%	0-5 0.0%	2-6 33.3%	1-1 100.0%	3-4 75.0%	7	11

As a group, the bench players had a lousy week. Their shooting percentages were lousy, and they didn't chip in many points.

Individually, only Gibson contributed anything. For the week, the bench players scored 18 points, and Gibson had 14 of them.

Coleman ended his Michigan career by taking 3 shots in 2 games, and missing them all.

It was nice to see Merritt back out there, even if he didn't do much.

Big Ten Tournament

The Big Ten Tournament was held in Conseco Fieldhouse in Indianapolis last week. Wisconsin won it all, to go with their regular season championship.

Here are all the results, with the seeds in parentheses:

Thursday (03/13/2008)
Game 1: (#8) Iowa lost to (#9) Michigan, 55-47
Game 2: (#7) Penn State lost to (#10) Illinois, 64-63
Game 3: (#6) Minnesota beat (#11) Northwestern, 55-52

Friday (03/14/2008)
Game 4: (#1) Wisconsin beat (#9) Michigan, 51-34
Game 5: (#4) Michigan State beat (#5) Ohio State, 67-60
Game 6: (#2) Purdue lost to (#10) Illinois, 74-67 (ot)
Game 7: (#3) Indiana lost to (#6) Minnesota, 59-58

Saturday (03/15/2008)
Game 8: (#1) Wisconsin beat (#4) Michigan State, 65-63
Game 9: (#6) Minnesota lost to (#10) Illinois, 54-50

Sunday (03/16/2008)
Game 10: (#1) Wisconsin beat (#10) Illinois, 61-48

There were a few surprises, especially Illinois beating Purdue and Minnesota beating Indiana.

Only the top four teams from the Big Ten made it to the NCAA Tournament: (#5) Wisconsin, (#18) Purdue, (#20) Michigan State, and (#24) Indiana. Ohio State was a "bubble team", but their bubble popped when they lost to Michigan State on Friday.

Of the 7 Big Ten teams that didn't get into the NCAA Tournament, only 2 of them (Ohio State and Minnesota) had winning records. They both got into the NIT.

The Big Picture

Well, the season is over, and it was quite a disappointment. Michigan did win one game in the Big Ten Tournament, but they fell flat in the 2nd round against Wisconsin.

The bad news is that this season was a disaster. The good news is that next season should be noticeably better. Check back next week for a season wrap-up, final grades, and a look ahead to next season.

Here are the final 2007-2008 results:

Date	Opponent	Site	Result	Score	Record

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	W	103-87	4-6
12/15/2007 (Sat)	Central Michigan	Ann Arbor	L	78-67	4-7
12/22/2007 (Sat)	UCLA	Ann Arbor	L	69-54	4-8
01/02/2008 (Wed)	Wisconsin	Ann Arbor	L	70-54	4-9 (0-1)
01/05/2008 (Sat)	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.	L	65-58	4-10 (0-2)
01/08/2008 (Tue)	Indiana	Ann Arbor	L	78-64	4-11 (0-3)
01/12/2008 (Sat)	Northwestern	Evanston, Ill.	W	78-68	5-11 (1-3)
01/16/2008 (Wed)	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.	L	75-57	5-12 (1-4)
01/19/2008 (Sat)	Iowa	Ann Arbor	L	68-60	5-13 (1-5)
01/22/2008 (Tue)	Wisconsin	Madison, Wis.	L	64-61	5-14 (1-6)
01/27/2008 (Sun)	Michigan State	East Lansing, Mich.	L	77-62	5-15 (1-7)
01/31/2008 (Thu)	Minnesota	Ann Arbor	L	77-65	5-16 (1-8)
02/05/2008 (Tue)	Ohio State	Columbus, Ohio	L	65-55	5-17 (1-9)
02/09/2008 (Sat)	Penn State	Ann Arbor	W	68-63	6-17 (2-9)
02/14/2008 (Thu)	Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa	W	60-52	7-17 (3-9)
02/17/2008 (Sun)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor	W	80-70	8-17 (4-9)
02/21/2008 (Thu)	Minnesota	Minneapolis, Minn.	L	69-60	8-18 (4-10)
02/23/2008 (Sat)	Illinois	Ann Arbor	W	49-43	9-18 (5-10)
02/26/2008 (Tue)	Northwestern	Ann Arbor	L	62-60	9-19 (5-11)
03/01/2008 (Sat)	Penn State	State College, Pa.	L	69-61	9-20 (5-12)
03/09/2008 (Sun)	Purdue	Ann Arbor	L	72-58	9-21 (5-13)
Big Ten Tournament					
03/13/2008 (Thu)	Iowa	Indianapolis, Ind.	W	55-47	10-21 (5-13)
03/14/2008 (Fri)	Wisconsin	Indianapolis, Ind.	L	51-34	10-22 (5-13)

The Upcoming Week

Michigan's season is over, but there's still one more week of Nothing But 'Net. Check back next week for the season wrap-up, final grades, and a look ahead to next season.

Go Blue!