**11/24/2008 – Week #04 – The 2K Sports Classic, Final Four**

**The Week In Review**

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, both in the 2K Sports Classic, and they won the first and lost the second. On Thursday (11/20/2008), they beat (#4) UCLA 55-52, then on Friday (11/21/2008), they lost to (#10) Duke 71-56. Both games were in Madison Square Garden. The win and the loss leave Michigan with a record of 3-1.

The win over UCLA was huge, certainly the biggest win in the 9 years I've been writing this column. On the other hand, the loss to Duke was not particularly disappointing or surprising. Just beating UCLA was a big enough miracle; beating Duke the next day would have been too much to hope for.

Michigan beat UCLA by managing the tempo of the game. Their 1-3-1 zone defense really flustered UCLA, and Michigan hit some clutch shots down the stretch. Unfortunately, Duke had a much better scheme for beating Michigan's zone, and it worked. Still, finishing 2nd in a 16-team tournament isn't all bad.

**Game Statistics**

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

| Team | Field goals | 3-Pointers | Free throws |
|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 23-53 (43.4%) | 5-20 (25.0%) | 4-6 (66.7%) |
| UCLA | 21-50 (42.0%) | 5-16 (31.3%) | 5-11 (45.5%) |
| Advantage | Michigan | UCLA | Michigan |

It was a very close game, and these stats reflect it. Neither team shot particularly well, but UM managed 2 more baskets than UCLA.

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

| Team | Rebounds | Assists | Turnovers | Blocks | Steals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 25 | 15 | 10 | 4 | 8 |
| UCLA | 38 | 11 | 17 | 4 | 1 |
| Advantage | UCLA | Michigan | Michigan | Even | Michigan |

It's amazing the think that Michigan got out-rebounded by 13 boards and still won the game. Of course, the 7 extra UCLA turnovers sure helped offset their extra rebounds.

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

| Team | Field goals | 3-Pointers | Free throws |
|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 19-54 (35.2%) | 6-22 (27.3%) | 12-16 (75.0%) |
| Duke | 24-50 (48.0%) | 4-19 (21.1%) | 19-25 (76.0%) |
| Advantage | Duke | Michigan | Duke |

Look no further than the overall shooting percentage: UM shot poorly, and Duke shot well. End of story. The other 2 shooting stats are insignificant.

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

| Team | Rebounds | Assists | Turnovers | Blocks | Steals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Michigan | 28 | 14 | 12 | 2 | 10 |
| Duke | 40 | 15 | 17 | 4 | 6 |
| Advantage | Duke | Duke | Michigan | Duke | Michigan |

Once again, Michigan lost the rebounding battle badly, but this time they couldn't overcome the deficit. It is encouraging that Michigan has had pretty low turnover numbers so far this season.

**Season 3-Point Shooting**

The way UM's offense is set up, they need to get off at least 20 3-pointers, and hit at least 40% of them to win the big games. I'm not saying that they'll lose if they don't get 20/40, I'm just saying that if they do get 20/40, they'll win. Here's how things have gone so far:

| Date | Opponent | 3-Point Shooting | Result | Fits Theory? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11/06/2008 | Saginaw Valley State (exhibition) | 11-24 (45.8%) | W | Y |
| 11/11/2008 | Michigan Tech | 8-24 (33.3%) | W | Y |
| 11/12/2008 | Northeastern | 5-14 (35.7%) | W | Y |
| 11/20/2008 | UCLA | 5-20 (25.0%) | W | Y |
| 11/21/2008 | Duke | 6-22 (27.3%) | L | Y |
| Totals | | 35-104 (33.7%) | | 5-0 |

At least Michigan managed to get at least 20 3-pointers off in both games. However, their shooting percentages were pretty bad in both games, and they were lucky it didn't cost them the UCLA game.

**Individual Statistics**

Coach Beilein used his regular starting lineup in both games. Here's how the starters did:

| | Field Goals | | 3-Pointers | | Free Throws | | Points | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Player | UCLA | Duke | UCLA | Duke | UCLA | Duke | UCLA | Duke |
| Stu Douglass | 4-5 | 1-5 | 2-3 | 1-5 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 10 | 3 |
| Zack Gibson | 1-5 | 3-9 | 0-1 | 0-2 | 1-1 | 0-1 | 3 | 6 |
| Manny Harris | 5-13 | 6-12 | 2-7 | 2-5 | 3-4 | 11-12 | 15 | 25 |
| David Merritt | 1-3 | 0-0 | 0-2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 2 | 0 |
| Anthony Wright | 1-5 | 1-5 | 0-1 | 1-3 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 2 | 3 |
| Totals | 12-31<br>38.7% | 11-31<br>35.5% | 4-14<br>28.6% | 4-15<br>26.7% | 4-5<br>80.0% | 11-13<br>84.6% | 32 | 37 |

As a group, the starters did OK this week. Their percentages are acceptable, but they didn't score enough points.

Individually, only Harris hit double figures in both games, and Douglass was the only other starter to hit double figures in either game. No one else had enough points to matter.

At this point, I need to fix a problem in last week's column: while I correctly mentioned that Manny Harris was the only starter to hit double figures in both games that week, I completely forgot to give him proper recognition for two great games, especially the opener against Michigan Tech. He had 30 points in that game, which is a big deal, and he followed it up the next night against Northeastern with 26 more, which is also impressive. When you add on his 15 and 25 from this week, he scored a total of 96 points in the tournament,

which is a new tournament record. He was also the only Michigan player on the all-tournament team. Congratulations, Manny!

Besides his regular starting lineup, Coach Beilein also seems to have decided on his 5 regular bench players. For some reason, he wants to have DeShawn Sims come off the bench instead of starting, even though he plays more minutes (27.8/game) than all of the starters except Manny Harris. So far, it seems to be working, but it certainly is strange.

The biggest mystery to me is why Beilein decided to use up 7" 1' freshman center Ben Cronin's redshirt year by playing him in the Michigan Tech game, and hasn't played him since. Michigan beat Northeastern by 20 points, and lost to Duke by 15 points; surely he could have put Cronin in for a couple of minutes at the end of those games.

Anyway, here's how the bench players did this week:

| | Field Goals | | 3-Pointers | | Free Throws | | Points | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Player | UCLA | Duke | UCLA | Duke | UCLA | Duke | UCLA | Duke |
| Kelvin Grady | 1-4 | 2-6 | 1-2 | 1-3 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 3 | 5 |
| C.J. Lee | 0-1 | 1-1 | 0-1 | 1-1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 3 |
| Zack Novak | 0-1 | 0-2 | 0-0 | 0-2 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0 | 0 |
| Jevohn Shepherd | 1-1 | 0-1 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 0-0 | 1-2 | 2 | 1 |
| DeShawn Sims | 9-15 | 5-13 | 0-3 | 0-1 | 0-1 | 0-1 | 18 | 10 |
| Totals | 11-22<br>50.0% | 8-23<br>34.8% | 1-6<br>16.7% | 2-7<br>28.6% | 0-1<br>0.0% | 1-3<br>33.3% | 23 | 19 |

As a group, the bench players did fairly well. Their shooting percentages are decent, except for 3-point shooting, and they scored a reasonable number of points.

Individually, Sims was the only bench player to hit double figures in either game, and he did it in both games. None of the other bench players did very much.

**The Big Picture**

The 2K Sports Classic benefiting Coaches vs. Cancer is over, and it went pretty well. Michigan won their regional, as expected, and while they lost in the final game, they beat two pretty good teams to get there. UCLA was ranked #4, and Northeastern is now 3-1, with their only loss coming to Michigan. Three days after they lost to Michigan, they beat a pretty good Providence team on the road.

The rest of the non-conference schedule is an interesting mixture of good/great teams (Maryland, Duke, and Connecticut) and "cupcakes" (the rest). The next two games, both at home, are against cupcakes.

Here's the 2008-2009 schedule/results:

| Date | Opponent | Site | Result | Score | Record |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11/06/2008 (Thu) | Saginaw Valley State (exh) | Ann Arbor | W | 81-55 | 0-0 |
| *2K Sports Classic benefiting Coaches vs. Cancer* | | | | | |
| 11/11/2008 (Tue) | Michigan Tech | Ann Arbor | W | 77-55 | 1-0 |
| 11/12/2008 (Wed) | Northeastern | Ann Arbor | W | 76-56 | 2-0 |
| 11/20/2008 (Thu) | UCLA | New York, NY | W | 55-52 | 3-0 |
| 11/21/2008 (Fri) | Duke | New York, NY | L | 71-56 | 3-1 |
| 11/25/2008 (Tue) | Norfolk State | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 11/29/2008 (Sat) | Savannah State | Ann Arbor | | | |

| Date | Opponent | Site | Result | Score | Record |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *ACC/Big Ten Challenge* | | | | | |
| 12/03/2008 (Wed) | at Maryland | College Park, MD | | | |
| 12/06/2008 (Sat) | Duke | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 12/13/2008 (Sat) | Eastern Michigan | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 12/20/2008 (Sat) | vs. Oakland | Auburn Hills, MI | | | |
| 12/22/2008 (Mon) | Florida Gulf Coast | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 12/29/2008 (Mon) | North Carolina Central | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 12/31/2009 (Wed) | Wisconsin | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 01/04/2009 (Sun) | Illinois | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 01/07/2009 (Wed) | at Indiana | Bloomington, IN | | | |
| 01/11/2009 (Sun) | Iowa | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 01/14/2009 (Wed) | at Illinois | Champaign, IL | | | |
| 01/17/2009 (Sat) | Ohio State | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 01/20/2009 (Tue) | at Penn State | State College, PA | | | |
| 01/24/2009 (Sat) | Northwestern | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 01/28/2009 (Wed) | at Ohio State | Columbus, OH | | | |
| 01/31/2009 (Sat) | at Purdue | West Lafayette, IN | | | |
| 02/05/2009 (Thu) | Penn State | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 02/07/2009 (Sat) | at Connecticut | Storrs, CT | | | |
| 02/10/2009 (Tue) | Michigan State | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 02/15/2009 (Sun) | at Northwestern | Evanston, IL | | | |
| 02/19/2009 (Thu) | Minnesota | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 02/22/2009 (Sun) | at Iowa | Iowa City, IA | | | |
| 02/26/2009 (Thu) | Purdue | Ann Arbor | | | |
| 03/01/2009 (Sun) | at Wisconsin | Madison, WI | | | |
| 03/07/2009 (Sat) or 03/08/2009 (Sun) | at Minnesota | Minneapolis, MN | | | |
| *Big Ten Tournament* | | | | | |
| 03/12/2009 (Thu) | First Round | Indianapolis, IN | | | |
| 03/13/2009 (Fri) | Quarterfinal | Indianapolis, IN | | | |
| 03/14/2009 (Sat) | Semifinal | Indianapolis, IN | | | |
| 03/15/2009 (Sun) | Championship | Indianapolis, IN | | | |

**The Upcoming Week**

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan has two games this week. On Tuesday (11/25/2008, 8:30 p.m.) they play Norfolk State, then on Saturday (11/29/2008, 2:00 p.m.) they play Savannah State. Both games are in Crisler Arena, so come on down and cheer for the Wolverines.

Go Blue!