Nothing But 'Net – Week #11 (01/12/2009) – Two Big Wins

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 (01/07/2009), they beat Indiana 72-66 (overtime) in Bloomington, then on Sunday (01/11/2009), they beat Iowa 64-49 in Crisler Arena. The two wins raise Michigan's record to 13-3 (3-1 in Big Ten play).

The Indiana game was a true "tale of two halves". In the 1st half, Michigan looked pathetic, as bad as they looked last season when they lost to Harvard and Central Michigan. They trailed by 17 points (39-22) at halftime, and by 20 (44-24) with 2:00 gone in the 2nd half. It looked like they were goners, then they started coming back. They tied the game up 59-59 with 25 seconds left, and survived IU's last shot that would have won it. They played well in overtime, and managed to pull off the improbable win. The 1st half was almost unwatchable, but the 2nd half was very encouraging. The Wolverines never gave up, and they played with poise down the stretch. It was the first time Michigan has won in Bloomington since 1995.

After all the drama and suspense in the Indiana game, it was nice to see Michigan handle an inferior opponent on Sunday for a comfortable win. Iowa is a mess this season, and Michigan played more than well enough to beat them. The lead got as high as 26 points with 5:15 left in the game, before UM put in the subs, and Iowa scored some meaningless baskets to make the score look more respectable.

Game Statistics

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

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	24-61 (39.3%)	12-40 (30.0%)	12-14 (85.7%)
Indiana	26-63 (41.3%)	7-21 (33.3%)	7-13 (53.8%)
Advantage	Indiana	Indiana	Michigan

These are very interesting stats. Even though IU shot a better percentage from 3-point range, UM made 5 more 3-pointers, and that made all the difference in a close game. The other significant stat is free-throw shooting. IU was horrible, especially in overtime, when they were 3-for-9.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	35	15	13	5	6
Indiana	40	13	16	2	7
Advantage	Indiana	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Indiana

Other than Rebounds, these stats are too close to make much difference. The shooting stats tell the story here.

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

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	24-56 (42.9%)	7-22 (31.8%)	9-12 (75.0%)
Iowa	17-43 (39.5%)	6-17 (35.3%)	9-10 (90.0%)

Advantage	Michigan	Iowa	Iowa

Michigan won the overall shooting percentage battle, and that's what won them the game.

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

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	31	16	11	0	12
Iowa	29	11	18	1	3
Advantage	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Iowa	Michigan

Turnovers and Steals tell the story here. Iowa is a mess 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. In the past, I counted a win where UM didn't hit 20/40 as "fits the theory", but no more. To fit my theory, they either have to hit 20/40 and win, or hit less than 20/40 and lose. If they win, but fail to hit 20/40, that doesn't fit my theory.

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	N
11/12/2008	Northeastern	5-14 (35.7%)	W	N
11/20/2008	UCLA	5-20 (25.0%)	W	N
11/21/2008	Duke	6-22 (27.3%)	L	Y
11/25/2008	Norfolk State	9-27 (33.3%)	W	N
11/29/2008	Savannah State	4-22 (18.2%)	W	N
12/03/2008	Maryland	12-29 (41.4%)	L	N
12/06/2008	Duke	7-16 (43.8%)	W	N
12/13/2008	Eastern Michigan	16-33 (48.5%)	W	Y
12/20/2008	Oakland	13-29 (44.8%)	W	Y
12/22/2008	Florida Gulf Coast	12-42 (28.6%)	W	N
12/29/2008	North Carolina Central	9-30 (30.0%)	W	N
12/31/2008	Wisconsin	8-24 (33.3%)	L	Y
01/04/2009	Illinois	11-27 (40.7%)	W	Y
01/07/2009	Indiana	12-40 (30.0%)	W	N
01/11/2009	Iowa	7-22 (31.8%)	W	N
Totals		155-445 (34.8%)		6-11

This week, Michigan managed to win both games without shooting 3-pointers very well. Maybe they aren't as dependent on the 3-pointers as I thought…

Individual Statistics

Coach Beilein used yet another different starting lineup in both games this week. Here's how the starters did:

Player	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
	IU	Iowa	IU	Iowa	IU	Iowa	IU	Iowa
Kelvin Grady	2-6	3-6	2-5	2-4	0-0	0-0	6	8

Manny Harris	4-12	6-12	2-8	2-4	7-8	4-5	17	18
Laval Lucas-Perry	5-12	2-5	3-9	1-3	5-6	3-4	18	8
Zack Novak	2-6	1-6	2-6	1-5	0-0	2-2	6	5
DeShawn Sims	7-15	8-15	0-4	0-1	0-0	0-1	14	16
Totals	20-51 39.2%	20-44 45.5%	9-32 28.1%	6-17 35.3%	12-14 85.7%	9-12 75.0%	61	55

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

Individually, both Harris and Sims hit double figures in both games, and Lucas-Perry came close. So far, LLP has scored in double figures in 6 of the 7 games he's played in. It's nice to have another scoring threat out there, to keep opposing defenses from concentrating too much on Harris and Sims. LLP was the high scorer in the Indiana game.

Grady and Novak both played well, and chipped in a reasonable number of points. They both contributed in ways that didn't show up in the scoring totals. Grady brings the ball upcourt very quickly, and he's excellent at beating full-court pressure. Novak hustles all over the court, getting rebounds and steals, and diving for loose balls. He's very scrappy.

Here's how the bench players did this week:

	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
Player	IU	Iowa	IU	Iowa	IU	Iowa	IU	Iowa
Stu Douglass	1-4	1-3	1-4	0-2	0-0	0-0	3	2
Zack Gibson	1-2	1-5	0-1	0-1	0-0	0-0	2	2
C.J. Lee	2-3	1-3	2-2	0-1	0-0	0-0	6	2
David Merritt	0-1	0-0	0-1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Eric Puls	DNP	1-1	DNP	1-1	DNP	0-0	DNP	3
Jevohn Shepherd	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	0	0
Anthony Wright	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0-0	DNP	0
Totals	4-10 40.0%	4-12 33.3%	3-8 37.5%	1-5 20.0%	0.0 0.0%	0.0 0.0%	11	9

As a group, the bench players didn't do much. Their shooting percentages are acceptable, but they didn't score very many points.

Individually, no one contributed much. Lee did have two key 3-pointers that really helped the 2nd half comeback in the Indiana game, and Puls did hit his 2nd career 3-pointer (in 2 attempts). That's about it.

Big Ten Report

My weekly Big Ten Report is now a separate article, here.

The Big Picture

The Wolverines won two games that they had to win if they wanted to stay in the hunt for the Big Ten title. It was huge for them to win a road game, especially in Assembly Hall (Indiana), regardless of how "down" Indiana is this season. They face an even bigger challenge this upcoming week in the "other" Assembly Hall (Illinois).

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	W	83-49	4-1
11/29/2008 (Sat)	Savannah State	Ann Arbor	W	66-64 (ot)	5-1
ACC/Big Ten Challenge					
12/03/2008 (Wed)	at Maryland	College Park, MD	L	75-70	5-2
12/06/2008 (Sat)	Duke	Ann Arbor	W	81-73	6-2
12/13/2008 (Sat)	Eastern Michigan	Ann Arbor	W	91-60	7-2
12/20/2008 (Sat)	vs. Oakland	Auburn Hills, MI	W	89-76	8-2
12/22/2008 (Mon)	Florida Gulf Coast	Ann Arbor	W	76-59	9-2
12/29/2008 (Mon)	North Carolina Central	Ann Arbor	W	77-57	10-2
12/31/2009 (Wed)	Wisconsin	Ann Arbor	L	73-61	10-3 (0-1)
01/04/2009 (Sun)	Illinois	Ann Arbor	W	74-64	11-3 (1-1)
01/07/2009 (Wed)	at Indiana	Bloomington, IN	W	72-66 (ot)	12-3 (2-1)
01/11/2009 (Sun)	Iowa	Ann Arbor	W	64-49	13-3 (3-1)
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 plays two games this week. On Wednesday (01/14/2009, 8:30 p.m. EST, Big Ten Network) they play at Illinois, and on Saturday (01/17/2009, 8:00 p.m., Big Ten Network) they play Ohio State, in Crisler Arena. Come on down to Crisler, and cheer on the Wolverines.

Go Blue!