

Nothing But 'Net – Week #08 (12/07/2009) – A Mediocre Week

The Week In Review

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played 2 games this week, both at home, and they won one and lost one. [On Wednesday \(12/02/2009\), they lost to Boston College \(BC\) 62-58](#), then [on Saturday \(12/05/2009\), they beat Arkansas-Pine Bluff \(UAPB\) 67-53](#). The loss and the win leave Michigan with a record of 4-3, which is not very good.

Michigan has enough talent to beat Boston College, but they let the game slip away during the first 35 minutes, then put on a valiant effort in the last 5 minutes to try to steal the win. Michigan cut the deficit down to 6 points (57-51) with about 2 minutes left, but that was as close as they got, until they scored a meaningless basket at the buzzer to make it a 4-point loss. During the first 35 minutes, the Wolverines looked slow, uninspired, and confused. During the last 5 minutes, they played with much more desire. If they had played the whole 40 minutes like they did in the last 5 minutes, they could have won the game.

Oh yeah: for the first time in history (11 years: 1999 – 2009), the Big Ten finally won the ACC/Big Ten Challenge, 6 games to 5, no thanks to Michigan.

After losing 3 games in a row, it's hard to criticize any win, but that's what I'm here for! Seriously, UM should have beaten UAPB by 25-30 points, but the Wolverines were listless for the entire 1st half, and went to the locker room tied 32-32. Fortunately, they woke up in the 2nd half and went on an 11-1 run in the first 5:37 to get a little breathing room. Michigan pushed the lead as high as 17 points, and never let it get below 8 points the rest of the way.

Game Statistics

First, let's look at the shooting [statistics from the Boston College game](#):

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	21-65 (32.3%)	9-34 (26.5%)	7-11 (63.6%)
Boston College	23-49 (46.9%)	3-11 (27.3%)	13-20 (65.0%)
Advantage	Boston College	Boston College	Boston College

Boston College won all 3 of these stats, and that's why they won the game. The most important stat here is the overall shooting. Michigan just isn't shooting well, and it's costing them games. All the fancy offensive schemes may get the right players the right shots, but if they don't go in, Michigan will still lose the game. That's what's happening.

Now, let's look at the non-shooting [statistics from the Boston College game](#):

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	32	10	5	3	8
Boston College	43	18	13	6	1
Advantage	BC	BC	Michigan	BC	Michigan

Once again, Michigan got pounded on the boards. Fortunately, the Turnovers and Steals made up for some of it, but not all of it. Still, it was the gap in overall shooting that cost Michigan the game.

Next, let's look at the shooting [statistics from the UAPB game](#):

Team	Field goals	3-Pointers	Free throws
Michigan	24-56 (42.9%)	6-24 (25.0%)	13-16 (81.3%)
UAPB	20-48 (41.7%)	5-13 (38.5%)	8-11 (72.7%)
Advantage	Michigan	UAPB	Michigan

Michigan's shooting stats were only slightly better than UAPB's, except for 3-point shooting, which was miserable again. As I have said for the last 3 years, if your team is going to live and die by the 3-pointer, they need to shoot around 40%, not 25%.

Finally, let's look at the non-shooting [statistics from the UAPB game](#):

Team	Rebounds	Assists	Turnovers	Blocks	Steals
Michigan	31	14	12	5	6
UAPB	33	9	22	1	6
Advantage	UAPB	Michigan	Michigan	Michigan	Even

It's kind of embarrassing that Michigan got out-rebounded by Arkansas-Pine Bluff, but the 10 extra Turnovers negated that stat. The rest of these stats balance each other out.

Individual Statistics

[Coach Beilein](#) went with his regular starting lineup in both games this week. Here's how the starters did:

Player	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
	BC	UAPB	BC	UAPB	BC	UAPB	BC	UAPB
Manny Harris	7-18	6-10	1-6	3-4	4-4	3-3	19	18
Laval Lucas-Perry	2-7	2-4	0-3	2-4	1-2	0-1	5	6
Darius Morris	0-0	2-4	0-0	0-1	1-2	4-4	1	8
Zack Novak	3-11	2-6	3-9	0-4	0-1	3-3	9	7
DeShawn Sims	2-7	8-14	0-2	0-1	0-0	3-5	4	19
Totals	14-43 32.6%	20-38 52.6%	4-20 20.0%	5-14 35.7%	6-9 66.7%	13-16 81.3%	38	58

As a group, the starters did pretty well. Their percentages are reasonable, except for 3-point shooting in the Boston College game, and they scored a reasonable number of points.

Individually, Harris was the only player to hit double figures in both games. He shot a decent overall percentage in both games, and he was perfect from the free-throw line, but he had a tough time shooting 3-pointers against BC. He did shoot 3's much better in the UAPB game.

Sims had a lousy game against BC, but he was much better in the UAPB game. In fact, he had a "double-double": 19 points and 10 rebounds. The rest of the starters didn't contribute much offensively. Novak played hard in both games, and almost hit double figures in both of them. Morris had his best game so far against UAPB, and LLP looked OK in both games, although he didn't score much.

Coach Beilein played his 4 "regular" bench players in both games, and Eso Akunne and Ben Cronin got in for a couple minutes. Here's how the bench players did:

Player	Field Goals		3-Pointers		Free Throws		Points	
	BC	UAPB	BC	UAPB	BC	UAPB	BC	UAPB

Eso Akunne	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	DNP	0
Ben Cronin	0-1	DNP	0-0	DNP	0-0	DNP	0	DNP
Stu Douglass	3-8	1-7	2-7	1-7	0-0	0-0	8	3
Zack Gibson	3-6	3-5	2-3	0-1	1-2	0-0	9	6
Matt Vogrich	0-4	0-1	0-2	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0
Anthony Wright	1-3	0-5	1-2	0-1	0-0	0-0	3	0
Totals	7-22 31.8%	4-18 22.2%	5-14 35.7%	1-10 10.0%	1-2 50.0%	0-0 0.0%	20	9

As a group, the bench players didn't make much of a contribution. Their shooting percentages are mediocre, and they didn't score many points.

Individually, only Gibson really did much out there. It was his 3-point shooting in the last 5 minutes of the Boston College game that brought UM back to within striking distance. He made his first 2 attempts, but missed his 3rd shot. If that one had gone in, the roof would have blown off Crisler, and Michigan might have won the game. It missed, and that was the game. I'm not blaming the loss on Gibson; he played pretty well. I'm blaming the whole team for the way they played in the first 35 minutes.

The Big Picture

So far, Michigan has played 3 "should win" games (Northern Michigan, Houston Baptist, and Arkansas-Pine Bluff), and they've won all 3 of them. They have played 4 "toss up" games (Creighton, Marquette, Alabama, and Boston College), and they've only won 1 of them. In order to make it to the NCAA Tournament, UM needs to win all their "should win" games and win 5 of their 9 "toss up" games. Since they have already lost 3 "toss up" games, they can only afford to lose one more. Yikes.

In addition to the raw numbers (win-loss record), Michigan needs some "quality wins", and there are very few non-conference opportunities left: at Utah, at Kansas, and home vs. Connecticut. The Kansas and Connecticut games look pretty hopeless, which leaves Utah. If Michigan loses that game, which certainly seems possible, they will be left with zero "quality wins" in non-conference play. Yikes, again.

Here's the 2009-2010 schedule/results:

Date	Opponent	Site	Result	Score	Record
11/06/2009 (Fri)	Wayne State (exh)	Ann Arbor	W	73-54	0-0
11/14/2009 (Sat)	Northern Michigan	Ann Arbor	W	97-50	1-0
11/20/2009 (Fri)	Houston Baptist	Ann Arbor	W	77-55	2-0
Old Spice Classic					
11/26/2009 (Thu)	vs. Creighton	Orlando, FL	W	83-76 (ot)	3-0
11/27/2009 (Fri)	vs. Marquette	Orlando, FL	L	79-65	3-1
11/29/2009 (Sun)	vs. Alabama	Orlando, FL	L	68-66	3-2
ACC/Big Ten Challenge					
12/02/2009 (Wed)	Boston College	Ann Arbor	L	62-58	3-3
12/05/2009 (Sat)	Arkansas - Pine Bluff	Ann Arbor	W	67-53	4-3
12/09/2009 (Wed)	at Utah	Salt Lake City, UT			
12/13/2009 (Sun)	Detroit - Mercy	Ann Arbor			
12/19/2009 (Sat)	at Kansas	Lawrence, KS			
12/22/2009 (Tue)	Coppin State	Ann Arbor			
12/31/2010 (Thu)	at Indiana	Bloomington, IN			
01/03/2010 (Sun)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor			

01/07/2010 (Thu)	at Penn State	State College, PA			
01/10/2010 (Sun)	Northwestern	Ann Arbor			
01/14/2010 (Thu)	Indiana	Ann Arbor			
01/17/2010 (Sun)	Connecticut	Ann Arbor			
01/20/2010 (Wed)	at Wisconsin	Madison, WI			
01/23/2010 (Sat)	at Purdue	West Lafayette, IN			
01/26/2010 (Tue)	Michigan State	Ann Arbor			
01/30/2010 (Sat)	Iowa	Ann Arbor			
02/02/2010 (Tue)	at Northwestern	Evanston, IL			
02/06/2010 (Sat)	Wisconsin	Ann Arbor			
02/11/2010 (Thu)	at Minnesota	Minneapolis, MN			
02/16/2010 (Tue)	at Iowa	Iowa City, IA			
02/20/2010 (Sat)	Penn State	Ann Arbor			
02/23/2010 (Tue)	Illinois	Ann Arbor			
02/27/2010 (Sat) or 02/28/2010 (Sun)	at Ohio State	Columbus, OH			
03/02/2010 (Tue) or 03/03/2010 (Wed)	Minnesota	Ann Arbor			
03/06/2010 (Sat) or 03/07/2010 (Sun)	at Michigan State	East Lansing, MI			
Big Ten Tournament					
03/11/2010 (Thu)	First Round	Indianapolis, IN			
03/12/2010 (Fri)	Quarterfinal	Indianapolis, IN			
03/13/2010 (Sat)	Semifinal	Indianapolis, IN			
03/14/2010 (Sun)	Championship	Indianapolis, IN			

The Upcoming Week

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan plays 2 games next week. On Wednesday (12/09/2009, 9:00 p.m. EST), they play at Utah, then on Sunday (12/13/2009, 12:00 p.m., Big Ten Network), they play Detroit-Mercy in Crisler Arena. Come on and cheer on the Wolverines.

Go Blue!