

## Nothing But 'Net – Week #14 (01/18/2010) – Two Big Wins

### The Week In Review

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played 2 games last week, and they won both of them. [On Thursday \(01/14/2010\), they beat Indiana \(IU\) 69-45](#), then [on Sunday \(01/17/2010\), they beat \(#15\) Connecticut \(UConn\) 68-63](#). Both games were in Crisler Arena, and both games were on national TV (ESPN and CBS, respectively). The wins raise Michigan's record to 10-7 (3-2 in the Big Ten). Michigan has now won 4 of their last 5 games.

Michigan didn't look particularly good for most of the IU game, but they played well in the last 6 minutes, and won convincingly. With 5:45 left in the game, Michigan was clinging to a 5 point lead (48-43). They outscored IU 21-2 the rest of the way, including a 15-0 run to end the game.

The IU win was important, since it was a conference game, and especially since [IU had beaten Michigan just 2 weeks earlier \(12/31/2009\) in Bloomington](#). If Michigan had lost to Indiana in Ann Arbor, the season would have been a complete mess.

As important as the IU win was, the win over UConn was even bigger. If Michigan has any chance of getting back into the NCAA Tournament again this season, they need some "signature" wins, and this was definitely one of them. Connecticut is a good, solid team, with a lot of height and athleticism, and Michigan had to play very well to beat them. The Wolverines controlled the game, and managed to hit just enough 3-pointers to make up for all the easy 2-pointers UConn made in the paint. UConn hardly even tried to score from outside, with only one made 3-pointer, on 11 attempts. Their game plan was to pound the ball inside against a smaller Michigan team, and it almost worked.

Things sure didn't look good early in the UConn game. With 14:43 left in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, UConn was up 12-6, before [Stu Douglass](#) hit a pair of 3-pointers to tie it up. Michigan kept the run going, and built a nice 9-point lead, 23-14, with 8:08 left. They traded points for the rest of the half, and still led by 9 at halftime, 32-23. UM scored first in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, to push the lead up to 11 (34-23), and then UConn started their big comeback. Over the next 6 minutes, they outscored Michigan 16-5 to tie it up 39-all with 13:35 left. The lead seesaw-ed back and forth for the next 12 minutes, with neither team getting ahead by more than 4 points. With 1:30 left it was still tied, 58-58, when [Zack Novak](#) hit a clutch 3-pointer to put Michigan ahead for good. Michigan played with poise in the final 90 seconds, and earned the big win.

### Game Statistics

Once again, here are the "streamlined" stats. If you want to see the full stats, check out MGoBlue.com for the [Indiana](#) and [Connecticut](#) boxscores. Here are the highlights:

[Manny Harris](#) and [DeShawn Sims](#) (vs. IU), and Harris, Douglass, and Novak (vs. UConn).

Once again, Harris (21 points) and Sims (20 points) were the only Michigan players in double figures vs. Indiana. That is not very surprising. However, if you had told me before the game that UConn would hold Sims to 8 points, I would have told you that Michigan was going to lose by 20 points. Since Sims is Michigan's only consistent scoring threat underneath, and UConn is so tall and athletic, I couldn't imagine Michigan winning without a big game from Sims. Instead, Douglass and Novak came through with some timely 3-point shooting to make up for Michigan's lack of interior scoring. They didn't shoot very well from

3-point range (3-for-10 for Douglass, 1-for-3 for Novak), but all 4 of their made shots were huge.

Douglass and Novak only chipped in 4 and 6 points respectively in the IU game, and the 5<sup>th</sup> starter, [Laval Lucas-Perry](#), had 7 and 6 points in the 2 games. The bench didn't chip in much scoring in the IU game (11 points), but they were big in the UConn game. The surprise hero was [Anthony Wright](#), with 9 points on 3-for-5 shooting from 3-point range.

## The Big Picture

The 2 wins this week sure helped, but Michigan still has an uphill battle to get back to the NCAA Tournament. They still need 9 or 10 more wins, with 13 games left to play. Since 3 of those games are at Wisconsin, Michigan State, and Purdue, they pretty much need to win all their remaining 6 home games, and go 3-4 on the road. It's quite a challenge.

Here's the 2009-2010 schedule/results:

| Date                                       | Opponent                              | Site               | Result | Score                      | Record     |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------|----------------------------|------------|
| 11/06/2009 (Fri)                           | <a href="#">Wayne State</a> (exh)     | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">73-54</a>      | 0-0        |
| 11/14/2009 (Sat)                           | <a href="#">Northern Michigan</a>     | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">97-50</a>      | 1-0        |
| 11/20/2009 (Fri)                           | <a href="#">Houston Baptist</a>       | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">77-55</a>      | 2-0        |
| <b>Old Spice Classic</b>                   |                                       |                    |        |                            |            |
| 11/26/2009 (Thu)                           | vs. <a href="#">Creighton</a>         | Orlando, FL        | W      | <a href="#">83-76</a> (ot) | 3-0        |
| 11/27/2009 (Fri)                           | vs. <a href="#">Marquette</a>         | Orlando, FL        | L      | <a href="#">79-65</a>      | 3-1        |
| 11/29/2009 (Sun)                           | vs. <a href="#">Alabama</a>           | Orlando, FL        | L      | <a href="#">68-66</a>      | 3-2        |
| <b>ACC/Big Ten Challenge</b>               |                                       |                    |        |                            |            |
| 12/02/2009 (Wed)                           | <a href="#">Boston College</a>        | Ann Arbor          | L      | <a href="#">62-58</a>      | 3-3        |
| 12/05/2009 (Sat)                           | <a href="#">Arkansas - Pine Bluff</a> | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">67-53</a>      | 4-3        |
| 12/09/2009 (Wed)                           | at <a href="#">Utah</a>               | Salt Lake City, UT | L      | <a href="#">68-52</a>      | 4-4        |
| 12/13/2009 (Sun)                           | <a href="#">Detroit - Mercy</a>       | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">75-64</a>      | 5-4        |
| 12/19/2009 (Sat)                           | at <a href="#">Kansas</a>             | Lawrence, KS       | L      | <a href="#">75-64</a>      | 5-5        |
| 12/22/2009 (Tue)                           | <a href="#">Coppin State</a>          | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">76-46</a>      | 6-5        |
| 12/31/2010 (Thu)                           | at <a href="#">Indiana</a>            | Bloomington, IN    | L      | <a href="#">71-65</a>      | 6-6 (0-1)  |
| 01/03/2010 (Sun)                           | <a href="#">Ohio State</a>            | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">73-64</a>      | 7-6 (1-1)  |
| 01/07/2010 (Thu)                           | at <a href="#">Penn State</a>         | State College, PA  | W      | <a href="#">64-55</a>      | 8-6 (2-1)  |
| 01/10/2010 (Sun)                           | <a href="#">Northwestern</a>          | Ann Arbor          | L      | <a href="#">68-62</a>      | 8-7 (2-2)  |
| 01/14/2010 (Thu)                           | <a href="#">Indiana</a>               | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">69-45</a>      | 9-7 (3-2)  |
| 01/17/2010 (Sun)                           | <a href="#">Connecticut</a>           | Ann Arbor          | W      | <a href="#">68-63</a>      | 10-7 (3-2) |
| 01/20/2010 (Wed)                           | at <a href="#">Wisconsin</a>          | Madison, WI        |        |                            |            |
| 01/23/2010 (Sat)                           | at <a href="#">Purdue</a>             | West Lafayette, IN |        |                            |            |
| 01/26/2010 (Tue)                           | <a href="#">Michigan State</a>        | Ann Arbor          |        |                            |            |
| 01/30/2010 (Sat)                           | <a href="#">Iowa</a>                  | Ann Arbor          |        |                            |            |
| 02/02/2010 (Tue)                           | at <a href="#">Northwestern</a>       | Evanston, IL       |        |                            |            |
| 02/06/2010 (Sat)                           | <a href="#">Wisconsin</a>             | Ann Arbor          |        |                            |            |
| 02/11/2010 (Thu)                           | at <a href="#">Minnesota</a>          | Minneapolis, MN    |        |                            |            |
| 02/16/2010 (Tue)                           | at <a href="#">Iowa</a>               | Iowa City, IA      |        |                            |            |
| 02/20/2010 (Sat)                           | <a href="#">Penn State</a>            | Ann Arbor          |        |                            |            |
| 02/23/2010 (Tue)                           | <a href="#">Illinois</a>              | Ann Arbor          |        |                            |            |
| 02/27/2010 (Sat)<br>or<br>02/28/2010 (Sun) | at <a href="#">Ohio State</a>         | Columbus, OH       |        |                            |            |
| 03/02/2010 (Tue)                           | <a href="#">Minnesota</a>             | Ann Arbor          |        |                            |            |

|                                            |                                   |                  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|--|--|--|
| or<br>03/03/2010 (Wed)                     |                                   |                  |  |  |  |
| 03/06/2010 (Sat)<br>or<br>03/07/2010 (Sun) | at <a href="#">Michigan State</a> | East Lansing, MI |  |  |  |
| <a href="#">Big Ten Tournament</a>         |                                   |                  |  |  |  |
| 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 |  |  |  |

See my [Big Ten Report](#) for a complete rundown of the Big Ten last week.

### **The Upcoming Week**

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan plays 2 games next week, both on the road, and both in places where they seldom win. On Wednesday (01/20/2010, 8:30 p.m. EST, Big Ten Network), they play at Wisconsin, then on Saturday (01/23/2010, 4:00 p.m. EST, ESPN), they play at Purdue. Tune by and check out the Wolverines.

Go Blue!