

Nothing But 'Net – Week #16 (02/01/2010) – All Mixed Up, And Second Trimester Grades

The Week In Review

It was a crazy week. I'm all mixed up. The University of Michigan men's basketball team played 2 games last week, and they lost one and won one, but the loss felt like a win, and the win felt like a loss. Both games were in Crisler Arena. [On Tuesday \(01/26/2010\), they lost to \(#5\) Michigan State 57-56](#), then [on Saturday \(01/30/2010\), they beat Iowa 60-46](#). The loss and the win leave Michigan with a record of 11-10 (4-5 in the Big Ten).

So, why did the loss to MSU feel like a win? Because Michigan outplayed MSU for much of the game, and led by a point (56-55) with 3.5 seconds left. MSU scored 2 points with 3.5 seconds left, and UM got off one last shot: a layup that rimmed off. It could just as easily have gone in, and things would have been very different. So, it was very encouraging to see unranked Michigan give #5 MSU all they could handle, even if the bad guys won in the end.

So, why did the Iowa win feel like a loss? Because Michigan "played down to the competition" for most of the game, after the first nine and a half minutes. Michigan scored the first 13 points, and led 17-2 with 10:34 left in the 1st half before Iowa finally scored their first field goal. When you consider that UM only won by 14 points, they were actually outscored in the last 30 minutes. It was a boring, tedious game, and Michigan looked sloppy and uninspired. Yeah, it was a win, and in a season where the wins haven't piled up like we expected, any win is a good win, but this was the worst "good win" in a while. The other good news was that it ended UM's 3-game losing streak.

The other news this week was the resolution of "the Manny situation". [After being suspended for one game \(Purdue\) last week](#), [Manny Harris](#) was reinstated for the MSU game, although he didn't start that game. He did start the Iowa game.

Game And Individual Statistics

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

- Michigan continued to shoot poorly against MSU, but they did a little better against Iowa.
- Michigan was crushed on the boards in the MSU game (41-25), but returned the favor against Iowa (44-31).
- The only players in double figures were Harris and [DeShawn Sims](#), in both games. Sims had another double-double (12 rebounds) in the Iowa game, and Harris had as many turnovers (6) as baskets vs. Iowa. Still, he managed to score 16 and 20 points against MSU and Iowa, respectively, and Sims had 19 and 20.

The rest of the starters didn't do much in either game. [Stu Douglass](#) and [Zack Novak](#) both had 7 and 6 points, respectively, [Laval Lucas-Perry](#) had 0 and 4 points, and [Anthony Wright](#) (starting for Harris in the MSU game) had 3 points. Michigan really needs another consistent double-digit scorer to go with Harris and Sims.

The bench didn't help out much either, if you don't count the points Harris scored when he came off the bench vs. MSU. [Darius Morris](#) and [Zack Gibson](#) each had 2 points in each game, and they were the only bench players to score in either game.

The Big Picture

Michigan is finally done with their "murder's row" of games: 4 in a row against ranked opponents. Unfortunately, they lost 3 of the 4 games. Since all the losses were pretty predictable, Michigan's situation with respect to getting into the NCAA Tournament still hasn't changed much. They still need 8 or 9 more wins, with 9 games left to play. Since they still have to play Wisconsin (in Crisler) and Michigan State (on the road), things don't look very good. They pretty much need to win all their remaining 4 home games, and go 4-1 on the road. It's quite a challenge. Of course, they could guarantee themselves a spot in the Big Dance by winning the Big Ten Tournament, but that's an even bigger challenge. It sure looks like an NIT season at this point.

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	L	68-52	4-4
12/13/2009 (Sun)	Detroit - Mercy	Ann Arbor	W	75-64	5-4
12/19/2009 (Sat)	at Kansas	Lawrence, KS	L	75-64	5-5
12/22/2009 (Tue)	Coppin State	Ann Arbor	W	76-46	6-5
12/31/2010 (Thu)	at Indiana	Bloomington, IN	L	71-65	6-6 (0-1)
01/03/2010 (Sun)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor	W	73-64	7-6 (1-1)
01/07/2010 (Thu)	at Penn State	State College, PA	W	64-55	8-6 (2-1)
01/10/2010 (Sun)	Northwestern	Ann Arbor	L	68-62	8-7 (2-2)
01/14/2010 (Thu)	Indiana	Ann Arbor	W	69-45	9-7 (3-2)
01/17/2010 (Sun)	Connecticut	Ann Arbor	W	68-63	10-7 (3-2)
01/20/2010 (Wed)	at Wisconsin	Madison, WI	L	54-48	10-8 (3-3)
01/23/2010 (Sat)	at Purdue	West Lafayette, IN	L	69-59	10-9 (3-4)
01/26/2010 (Tue)	Michigan State	Ann Arbor	L	57-56	10-10 (3-5)
01/30/2010 (Sat)	Iowa	Ann Arbor	W	60-46	11-10 (4-5)
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)	at Michigan State	East Lansing, MI			

or 03/07/2010 (Sun)					
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			

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

Second Trimester Grades

Once again this season, I'll be handing out grades 3 times: after the main part of the non-conference schedule (the end of December), halfway through the Big Ten schedule (now), and at the end of the season. Here are the grades for the season so far, along with the "first trimester" grades for comparison:

Player	Trimester Grades		Comments
	1 st	2 nd	
Freshmen			
Eso Akunne	C	F	Eso is academically ineligible for the winter term, but when he was eligible, he played more than anyone expected, and he did pretty well out there. He'll be back next year.
Josh Bartelstein	Inc.	Inc.	Josh has only played 8 minutes in 3 games so far this season, so he gets an "incomplete".
Ben Cronin	C-	F	Ben never fully recovered from his hip surgery, and he left the team for medical reasons. He left open the possibility that he could return some time in the future, but it's not likely.
Blake McLimans	Inc.	Inc.	Blake is voluntarily redshirting this season.
Jordan Morgan	Inc.	Inc.	Jordan is taking a medical redshirt year this season.
Darius Morris	C+	C	Darius started the first 9 games of the season, and he did OK out there, but not great. He runs the floor pretty well, and he makes reasonable, but not inspired, decisions at point guard. Along with the rest of the team, his shots are not falling. He's learning and progressing, just not as quickly as we had hoped.
Corey Person	Inc.	Inc.	Corey has only played 5 minutes in 3 games so far this season, so he gets an "incomplete".
Matt Vogrich	C	D+	Matt had a great first game, vs. Northern Michigan, when he went 5-for-5 from 3-point range. Since then, he hasn't done much. He often looks lost out there, and his minutes have been dropping.
Sophomores			
Stu Douglass	B-	B-	Stu has had some good games, and some forgettable games. He's played better since he took over the starting point guard position from Darius Morris. We know that he's got a great 3-point shot, he just needs to get a little more consistent. He's a very good defender.
Laval Lucas-Perry	B	B-	Laval has played pretty well so far. His 3-point shooting is the best of the "regulars", and he has done a decent

			job when he's taken a turn at point guard.
Zack Novak	B+	B	Even though Manny Harris and DeShawn Sims do most of the scoring and rebounding, Zack might just be the most valuable player on the team. He's certainly the most versatile player on the team, he hustles the whole time he's on the floor, and he plays bigger than his actual size. His shooting is off this season, but he still contributes any way he can.
Juniors			
Manny Harris	A	A-	Manny was very good the last 2 seasons, and he has been just as good this season. He shoots well, he can drive the lane, he rebounds well, and he plays good defense. Most importantly, he's a leader on the floor.
Anthony Wright	C-	D+	Anthony continues his slide further and further down the bench. He's got a nice 3-point shot, but he's been off lately. He needs to work on some other aspects of his game, including ballhandling, footwork, and help defense.
Seniors			
Zack Gibson	B-	C	Zack did pretty well earlier this season, but he has regressed since the Big Ten season started. He gives Sims a rest, but he's not much of an offensive threat when he's out there.
DeShawn Sims	B+	A-	DeShawn was pretty inconsistent earlier this season, but he's been much better since the Big Ten season started.
Coach			
John Beilein	C+	C+	After a breakthrough season last year, Coach Beilein has shown us what his system can do. Unfortunately, his system depends heavily on good 3-point shooting, and the team has been lousy from 3-point range most of the season. He needs to adapt, and get the team into higher percentage (2-point) shots, until the 3-point shooting comes around again.

Look at the freshman class: one player academically ineligible (Akunne), one player gone for medical reasons (Cronin), two players redshirting (McLimans and Morgan), two benchwarmers who seldom play (Bartelstein and Person), and only two players who get any significant playing time (Morris and Vogrich). What a mess!

The rest of the grades didn't change too much.

The Upcoming Week

As you can see in the schedule above, Michigan plays 2 games next week, one on the road, and one at home. On Tuesday (02/03/2010, 7:00 p.m. EST, Big Ten Network), they play at Northwestern, then on Saturday (02/06/2010, 4:00 p.m. CBS), they play Wisconsin in Crisler Arena. Tune by, and come on down to Crisler and cheer on the Wolverines.

Go Blue!