

Nothing But 'Net – Week #05 – 11/29/2010 – Lost Weekend In Atlantic City

Back to Earth. After winning their first 3 games at home against cupcakes, the Michigan basketball team finally (a) went on the road, (b) faced some tough opponents, and (c) lost both games. They played in the championship rounds of the [2010 Legends Classic](#), in Atlantic City, NJ. The good news is that they played very well against (#9) [Syracuse on Friday night, even though they lost a close one \(53-50\)](#). The bad news is that they played horribly on [Saturday night against UTEP, and lost 65-56](#). They were 3-0; now they're 3-2.

I can't imagine anyone wants to read very much about 2 losses, so I'm not going to write very much.

The Syracuse game was very encouraging. UM hung with them, and controlled the tempo. [Jordan Morgan](#) played his best game of the season, and held his own underneath against a big, stronger, more experienced Syracuse front line. As a team, Syracuse only out-rebounded Michigan by 2 (39-37). The big problem was fouls. Michigan committed 19 fouls to only 9 for Syracuse, and Syracuse went to the line 15 times compared to only 4 free throws for Michigan. That's the difference in the game right there.

The UTEP game was a step backwards. Michigan managed to tie the game up at halftime, but the first 5:40 of the 2nd half were a disaster. UTEP went on a 13-0 run, and that was the ballgame. Michigan didn't get the deficit down under 10 until the final minute of the game. Poor shooting was the big problem in this one. If the shots don't fall, especially the 3-pointers, Michigan is sunk.

Individually, Morgan (11 points) and [Stu Douglass](#) (11) hit double figures against Syracuse, and [Darius Morris](#) (20) and [Zack Novak](#) (10) did it against UTEP. [Tim Hardaway, Jr.](#) struggled in both games, with horrible shooting (3-for-12 and 1-for-8). Same for [Evan Smotrycz](#) (2-for-10 and 1-for-4). The other 2 "young bigs" ([Blake McLimans](#) and [Jon Horford](#)) didn't contribute much at all (4 and 2 total points, respectively).

Here are the complete stats for the [Syracuse](#) and [UTEP](#) games.

So, what did we learn from this weeks' games? We learned that Michigan needs to shoot well to hang with a tough opponent. We learned that Michigan doesn't have enough height and experience up front. And we learned that the Wolverines are just as unpredictable as everyone expected them to be.

Time to put those 2 games behind them, and move on. This week, Michigan plays 2 games. On Tuesday they have their first true road game (not neutral site), when they go to Clemson, SC to play [Clemson](#) in the [ACC/Big Ten Challenge](#). This is a rematch of the first round 2009 NCAA Tournament game that Michigan won. Should be quite a challenge. UM also plays on Saturday at home vs. [Harvard](#), coached by former Michigan head coach [Tommy Amaker](#). Michigan should win that one, but it won't be easy.

Go Blue!