

Nothing But 'Net – Week #05 – 11/28/2011 – Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad

The (#15) University of Michigan men's basketball team played three games last week in the [EA Sports Maui Invitational](#) tournament, and they won two out of three of them, to move to 5-1 on the season. [On Monday \(11/21/2011\), they beat \(#8\) Memphis 73-61](#), [on Tuesday \(11/22/2011\), they lost to \(#6\) Duke 82-75](#), then [on Wednesday \(11/23/2011\), they beat UCLA 79-63](#). As a result, they finished 3rd (out of 8 teams) in the tournament, which is very respectable. It was a very talented field this year, and Michigan's win over Memphis was huge. Michigan played very well, and it was very encouraging to see, especially after three lukewarm wins over "cupcakes" in Crisler Arena to start the season. UM played pretty well in the loss to Duke, then played another solid game to beat UCLA handily. It was a good tournament.

The team stats for all three games were very encouraging, even the loss to Duke.

- Against [Memphis](#), Michigan outshot Memphis 54.0% to 33.3%. Neither team shot 3-pointers very well, but Michigan still outshot Memphis 30.0% to 20.0%. Free-throw shooting was about even: Michigan shot 72.2%, Memphis shot 73.1%. UM out-rebounded Memphis (38-29), and had a lot more assists (15-6). Of course, UM also had a lot more turnovers than Memphis (14-8).
- In the [Duke](#) game, Michigan stayed close in overall shooting (49.2% vs. 56.5%), but got beaten badly in 3-point shooting (33.3% vs. 52.4%). Free-throw shooting was fairly close (66.7% vs. 70.4%), but the number of free throws was way off: Duke shot 19-for-27, while UM shot 6-for-9. Those 13 points account for more than the 7-point margin of victory for Duke. UM actually out-rebounded Duke (31-27) and had less turnovers (9-12), but Duke had more assists (13-10). The key stat was free throw shooting.
- Finally, the stats for the [UCLA](#) game look more like the Memphis game: UM outshot UCLA 61.7% to 41.8%, from 3-point range they outshot UCLA 50.0% to 23.5%, and from the free-throw line UCLA outshot Michigan 76.5% to 70.0%. UM out-rebounded UCLA (32-24), had more assists (14-11), but had more turnovers (14-12).

Individually, [Tim Hardaway Jr.](#) had a great tournament, and made the all-tournament team. He averaged 20 points/game (21 vs. Memphis, 19 vs. Duke, and 20 vs. UCLA), and was the only UM player to hit double figures in all three games. He had a lousy 1st half in the Duke game, with 0 points, but he played well in the other five halves. A couple other UM players hit double figures in two of the three games: [Trey Burke](#) (14 vs. Memphis, 17 vs. Duke, and 5 vs. UCLA), and [Zack Novak](#) (8, 11, and 22). Burke's 17 points vs. Duke were a career-high for him, and Novak's 22 points vs. UCLA were a career-high as well. The other two starters did pretty well: [Jordan Morgan](#) (4, 12, and 0), and [Evan Smotrycz](#) (7, 5, and 7).

Since Michigan was playing three games in three days, they needed to get more help than usual from the bench, and they got it: 19 points in the Memphis game, 11 points vs. Duke, and 25 points in the UCLA game. Only one bench player hit double figures in any of the three games: [Jon Horford](#) with 12 points vs. UCLA, a career-high for him. He also had 6 points vs. Memphis, but 0 points in the Duke game. [Stu Douglass](#) (6, 9, and 9) also had a good tournament. [Matt Vogrich](#) scored in two of the three games (2, 2, and 0), and so did [Eso Akunne](#) (3, DNP, and 2). Akunne's 3-pointer vs. Memphis was a real momentum changer. A couple other bench players scored: [Carlton Brundidge](#) (2 points vs. UCLA), and [Colton Christian](#) (2 points vs. Memphis).

The Nothing But 'Net Expectation-O-Meter (NBNEOM) has been reset to point to "Meets Expectations".

So, what happened in the Duke game? Is this a bad sign? Does it mean that Michigan isn't as good as we hoped/expected? Answer: it's too early to tell. UM played a decent game, but Duke was on fire, especially their 3-point shooting by their three young guards. If the two teams played again, Michigan might just win. Duke wasn't that much better than UM.

After playing three games in three days last week in Maui, Michigan only has two games this week. On Tuesday (11/20/2001, 7:00 p.m. EST, ESPN2), Michigan plays at Virginia, in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge, then on Saturday (12/03/2011, 12:00 p.m. EST, Big Ten Network), Michigan plays Iowa State in Crisler Arena. UM should win both games, but they won't be easy. Check back next week to see what happened, and why.

Go Blue!