

Nothing But 'Net – Week #05 – 11/26/2012 – NIT Season Tip-Off Champions!

Happy Thanksgiving! I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving. The basketball team sure did.

The (#4) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week in the [NIT Season Tip-Off](#) tournament, both in [Madison Square Garden](#) in New York City, and they won both of them. [On Wednesday \(11/21/2012\), UM beat Pittsburgh 67-62](#), then [on Friday \(11/23/2012\), they beat Kansas State 71-57](#). The two wins raise UM's record to 5-0, but more importantly, they give Michigan the NIT Season Tip-Off championship. This is the first preseason tournament that Michigan has won since 1997.

After playing "cupcakes" in their first 3 games, UM played 2 tough, aggressive, talented teams in NYC. The first 3 games didn't tell us much about this season's team, but these 2 games sure did. First of all, they told us that Michigan has a scrappy team that doesn't give up. They also told us that Michigan has a lot of weapons, and that [Coach Beilein](#) isn't afraid to use them. But most importantly, these 2 games showed us that UM can "win ugly". In the first 3 games, the 3-pointers fell like rain, and Michigan looked great. In the 2 games in NYC, the 3-pointers did not fall, and Michigan looked vulnerable. However, once it became apparent that the 3-pointers weren't going to fall, Michigan switched to an inside game, and that worked just fine. It's nice to have so many options.

We didn't learn too much from the stats from the first 3 games, but we can learn a lot from the stats from these games. First, let's look at the [stats for the Pittsburgh game](#). Michigan shot pretty well overall (23-for-50 = 46.0%), but they were terrible from 3-point range (3-for-17 = 17.6%). They did fine from the line (18-for-22 = 81.8%), and they out-rebounded Pitt (37-26) and had few turnovers (9). They won the game at the free-throw line, where they scored 18 points to Pitt's 6.

The [stats from the KSU game](#) are a little different. UM shot better overall (29-for-56 = 51.8%), and they shot a little better from 3-point range (4-for-12 = 33.3%), but they didn't shoot as well from the free-throw line (9-for-13 = 69.2%). They still won the rebounding battle (42-30), and they still had low turnovers (9). In this game, they won with rebounding and defense, holding KSU to 36.7% (22-for-60) overall shooting.

Looking at the individual stats, three players hit double figures in both games:

- [Trey Burke](#) (17 vs. Pitt and 10 vs. KSU). Trey made the All-Tournament team.
- [Tim Hardaway Jr.](#) (16 and 23). Tim was the tournament MVP, despite shooting a combined 2-for-10 from 3-point range.
- [Nik Stauskas](#) (15 and 10). Why isn't Nik starting?

One player came close to double figures in both games:

- [Glenn Robinson III](#) (13 and 9). GRIII had 12 rebounds vs. KSU, but also shot poorly from 3-point range (1-for-5 combined).

The other 2 starters didn't do much:

- [Jordan Morgan](#) (4 and 0). Jordan did have 8 rebounds in the Pitt game.
- [Matt Vogrich](#) (0 and 2). Why is Matt still starting? He's a great kid, a nice guy, a good leader, but he's just not doing much when he's on the floor.

Besides Stauskas, some of the other bench players chipped in some points:

- [Mitch McGary](#) (2 and 6). Mitch provided some much-needed heft underneath in both games.
- [Spike Albrecht](#) (0 and 3). Spike did OK running the point in relief of Trey.
- [Eso Akunne](#) (0 and 2). Eso showed some flashes of brilliance out there, but most of the time he just ran up and down the floor.

- [Jon Horford](#) (0 and 6). Jon looked a little lost out there.

[Max Bielfeldt](#) didn't play in the Pitt game, and played but didn't score in the KSU game. [Blake McLimans](#) and [Corey Person](#) didn't play in either game, and neither did [Josh Bartelstein](#), but Josh didn't play due to an ankle injury he suffered in the regular season opener vs. Slippery Rock.

This Week

Michigan has two games this week, one at home and one on the road. On Tuesday (11/27/2012, 7:30 p.m., ESPN), Michigan plays (#16) North Carolina State in Crisler Arena, as part of the [ACC/Big Ten Challenge](#), then on Saturday (12/01/2012, 4:00 p.m. EST, No TV), they play at Bradley, in beautiful Peoria, IL.

NC State (3-1) is a very good team, and this will be a great test for Michigan. On the other hand, Bradley isn't very good, but it's tough to win on the road against anyone. Still, I expect Michigan to win both of these games.

Check back next week to see what happened, and why.

Go Blue!