

Nothing But 'Net – Week #07 – 12/10/2012 – 4 Minutes Of Mild Discomfort, And WMU Too

The (#3) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games last week in Crisler Arena, and they won both of them. [On Tuesday \(12/04/2012\), they beat Western Michigan 73-41](#), then [on Saturday \(12/08/2012\), they beat Arkansas 80-67](#). The two wins raise UM's record to 9-0. The Arkansas win also represented win #100 at Michigan for [Coach Beilein](#).

So, what does "4 Minutes Of Mild Discomfort" mean? Well, Arkansas plays an aggressive style of basketball, with a nasty full-court press, that they call "40 Minutes Of Hell". Last season, when Michigan played in Fayetteville, Arkansas hit their first 11 shots and sprinted out to a big early lead. UM played from behind the whole game, and almost won it at the buzzer, but the Arkansas press really flustered Michigan for most of the game. This time around, Michigan controlled the tempo of the game, and didn't let the Arkansas press bother them. They broke the press consistently, and Arkansas decided not to run it much. My guess is that they ran it for a total of 4 minutes during the 40 minute game, and got maybe 2 turnovers out of it. So, it was more like "4 Minutes Of Mild Discomfort And 36 Minutes Of 'Press? What Press?"". It was a great revenge win over a pretty good team.

It wasn't brought up much, but the game against WMU was also a revenge game. It turns out that Western had won the last two games in the series, back in 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. This season's WMU team was pretty good, with a 6-1 record coming in, and for the first 12 minutes, it was a tight game, with Michigan up 20-15. Then UM went on a nice 15-6 run to end the half, up 35-21. Michigan pushed the lead up to 20 early in the 2nd half, and kept it around there or better for the rest of the game.

So, these were both good wins over pretty good teams, and Michigan looked good winning them. People were starting to get worried after the weak endings in the NC State and Bradley games, but Michigan played well down the stretch in both of these games.

Let's look at the stats, first for the [WMU game](#): Michigan shot pretty well overall (29-for-58 = 50.0%), but not as well as usual from 3-point range (8-for-21 = 38.1%). They didn't get to the free-throw line much, and didn't shoot particularly well there (7-for-11 = 63.6%). They did win the rebounding battle (35-31) and the turnover battle (10-18). The biggest factor was defense, since they held WMU to 28.9% shooting (13-for-45).

The stats for the [Arkansas game](#) are pretty similar: UM shot pretty well overall (29-for-62 = 46.8%), decent from 3-point land (7-for-18 = 38.9%), and much better from the free-throw line (15-for-18 = 83.3%). They won the game on the boards, where they dominated (42-26), including an amazing 18 offensive rebounds. They did lose the turnover battle (12-11), but that's not bad considering the "40 Minutes Of Hell" thing.

Individually, two players hit double figures in both games:

- [Trey Burke](#) (20 vs. WMU and 16 vs. Arkansas).
- [Nik Stauskas](#) (11 and 21). Nik finally had an "off" game shooting 3-pointers vs. Arkansas, going "only" 2-for-5. For the season, he's now 23-for-38 (60.5%), which is still very good.

Four other players came close to double figures in both games:

- [Tim Hardaway Jr.](#) (9 and 14). Tim continued to have trouble shooting from 3-point range: 1-for-3 and 1-for-4.
- [Mitch McGary](#) (10 and 6).
- [Jordan Morgan](#) (8 and 12). Jordan also had 10 rebounds in the Arkansas game, for another double-double.
- [Glenn Robinson III](#) (7 and 17).

If you paid attention there, you noticed that all five starters hit double figures in the Arkansas game, which is great scoring balance.

Besides the starters (and McGary), the bench chipped in a little scoring:

- [Spike Albrecht](#) (2 and 3).
- [Matt Vogrich](#) (3 and 0).
- [Caris LeVert](#) (3 and 0). LeVert got the first points of his career on his first attempt, a 3-pointer.

A few other bench players played in at least one game last week, but didn't score:

- [Eso Akunne](#)
- [Jon Horford](#)
- [Blake McLimans](#)
- [Corey Person](#) - Corey didn't play in the Arkansas game.

[Josh Bartelstein](#) is still out due to his ankle surgery, and [Max Bielfeldt](#) missed both games due to an ankle sprain. Bielfeldt won't require surgery, and he should be back in action soon.

This Week

Michigan has two games this week, one at home and one on the road. On Tuesday (12/11/2012, 7:00 p.m., BTN), Michigan plays [Binghamton](#), then on Saturday (12/15/2012, 8:00 p.m., ESPN), they play [West Virginia](#), in Brooklyn (NY) in the [Barclays Center](#), which is the new home of the [Brooklyn Nets](#) (formerly the New Jersey Nets) of the NBA. This game is part of a tripleheader of college games called the [Brooklyn Hoops Winter Festival](#). Since Coach Beilein came to Michigan from West Virginia, this game has added significance.

Binghamton is pure "cupcake", and I expect Michigan to crush them. West Virginia is currently 4-3, with only one impressive win (68-67 over Virginia Tech). Due to the fanfare of the event in an NBA arena, and the history surrounding Coach Beilein, I expect the WVU game to be close and hard-fought, but I expect Michigan to win in the end.

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

Go Blue!