

Nothing But 'Net – Week #10 – 12/31/2012 – A Perfect Non-Conference Season, Mid-Term Grades, And Big Ten Preview

Happy New Year (tomorrow).

The (#2) University of Michigan men's basketball team only played one game last week, and they won it handily. [On Saturday \(12/29/2012\), they beat Central Michigan 88-73](#) in Crisler Arena. The win raises UM's record to 13-0, and since this is their final non-conference game, they ended up with a perfect record. They also beat all four of the in-state "directional" schools: [Northern Michigan \(exhibition - 11/01/2012\)](#), [Western Michigan \(12/04/2012\)](#), [Eastern Michigan \(12/20/2012\)](#), and Central Michigan (12/29/2012).

The good news is that Michigan won the game, and kept their perfect record intact. The bad news is that they looked shaky on defense against a mediocre CMU team. Those 73 points are the most any team has scored against UM this season, and that includes games against Top-25 teams like (#23) North Carolina State (scored 72 points), (#24) Pittsburgh (scored 62 points), and (#25) Kansas State (scored 57 points). They held Bradley to 66 points, Arkansas to 67 points and West Virginia to 66 points. It was very discouraging to see CMU run and gun so easily against Michigan.

So, how did CMU do it? With rebounding: they out-rebounded Michigan decisively (38-29) including 11 offensive rebounds. Up until this game, UM has done a good job of keeping their opponents off the glass on defense, but not this time. The rest of the [stats](#): UM shot pretty well overall (35-for-68 = 51.5%), but not so well from 3-point range (11-for-29 = 37.9%). However, most of those missed 3-pointers were shot by the scrubs in the closing minutes of the game; if you take those shots out, UM really shot 50.0% (11-for-22) from beyond the arc. Michigan shot free throws just OK (7-for-11 = 63.6%), but they won the turnover battle handily (3-15).

Individually, 3 players hit double figures:

- [Trey Burke](#) - 22 points (and 11 assists, for a solid double-double).
- [Glenn Robinson III](#) - 20 points.
- [Nik Stauskas](#) - 19 points (5-for-8 from 3-point range).

That's 3 of the 5 starters. The other 2 starters were [Jordan Morgan](#), with 8 points, and [Caris LeVert](#), with 9 points, another career-high. LeVert started in place of [Tim Hardaway Jr.](#), who missed the first game of his career with a minor ankle injury. At this point, it isn't clear how long Tim will be out. The other injured player is [Jon Horford](#), who is still recovering from a minor knee injury. He should be back in action in another week or two.

Since the game wasn't very close most of the time, [Coach Beilein](#) played every healthy player on the bench. They didn't chip in much scoring:

- [Eso Akunne](#) - 1 point.
- [Spike Albrecht](#) - 2 points.
- [Max Bielfeldt](#) - 2 points.
- [Blake McLimans](#) - 0 points.
- [Mitch McGary](#) - 5 points.
- [Corey Person](#) - 0 points.
- [Matt Vogrich](#) - 0 points.

Mid-Term Grades

It's not quite the middle of the season, with 13 non-conference games played and 18 conference games left to go, but it's close enough for Mid-Term Grades:

[Freshman Eligibility](#)

[Spike Albrecht](#) - B

Spike does a pretty good job of giving Trey Burke a rest for 6-8 minutes per game, but he's just a "placeholder". He doesn't have the athletic ability to create his own shots and drive to the basket with authority like Trey does. Still, he doesn't panic when he's out there, and he tosses in a 3-pointer every now and then.

[Max Bielfeldt](#) - B-

Max has had minor injury problems so far this season, and has only played in 7 of the 13 games. When he's been in, he's looked solid, if unspectacular. He's a strong kid, and he knows where the ball is going, so he gets a fair share of the rebounds while he's on the floor. He's not much of a scoring threat, but he's turning into a pretty good post defender.

[Caris LeVert](#) - B

For the first 6 games of the season, it looked like Caris was going to be redshirted, then he played in the Bradley game, and every game since. He even started the CMU game, in place of the injured Tim Hardaway, Jr. He has a nice 3-point stroke, he's fast, he's athletic, and he has good "court vision". He could still stand to put on a few pounds of solid muscle, but that's going to have to wait for summer.

[Mitch McGary](#) - B

Mitch has been the 6th man all season, and he brings a lot of energy to the game when he comes in. He's pretty good at using his size and bulk underneath, and he runs the floor pretty well. He's getting better at defense every game, and he's going to be an important player in Big Ten play, against some of the taller/bigger centers.

[Glenn Robinson III](#) - A-

Glenn has played very well so far, although many of his points are "quiet points" that sneak up on you. As advertised out of high school, he is VERY athletic, with great speed and leaping ability. He has also shown a better-than-expected touch from 3-point range, and he's turning into a solid defender.

[Nik Stauskas](#) - A

Nik is the star of the class so far. In fact, he is one of the best 3-point shooters in all of college basketball. But, he has done much more than stand beyond the arc and rain in 3-pointers. He has 45 rebounds, 15 assists, 3 blocked shots, and 7 steals. He has helped bring the ball up court against pressure, he has driven to the basket with authority, and he has played pretty good defense. In short, he's much more of a complete player than we expected. After being the co-6th man (with Mitch McGary) for the first 6 games, he replaced Matt Vogrich in the starting lineup, and he hasn't looked back. He has scored in double figures in every game except the opener (vs. Slippery Rock), and he's been the leading scorer a few times. His only bad habit is when he tries to get too fancy with some of his behind-the-back or no-look passes.

Sophomore Eligibility

[Trey Burke](#) - A+

Trey has been awesome so far this season. Just awesome. He has shown a mature NBA game in just about every facet. He leads the team in scoring (by 41 points), assists (by 65), minutes (by 27), and steals (by 6). He is shooting a great percentage, both overall and from 3-point range, he's running the offense well, he's playing great defense, and he's being a true leader.

[Jon Horford](#) - B

Jon has only missed 3 games due to injury, but it seems like much more. When he's been in, he's played well. He has a spring/bounce to his step that few other players have. He's shown a real talent for blocking shots and playing tough defense. His offensive game is a little behind.

Junior Eligibility

[Tim Hardaway Jr.](#) - A-

When Tim is good, he's very good, but when he's having an "off" game, he disappears. He's had a couple small shooting slumps, especially from 3-point range, but he still manages to score, usually by driving to the basket. He's great in transition.

[Blake McLimans](#) - C-

I like Blake, and I really want to see him succeed, but when he's in the game, he just doesn't deliver. He's supposed to be a great 3-point shooter, but he hasn't really shown it. He plays way shorter than 6'10", and he tends to hang out around the 3-point line instead of under the basket. He only gets in during "garbage time" these days, which is a shame.

[Jordan Morgan](#) - B+

Jordan doesn't have flashy stats, but he knows his role and delivers. He's a good rebounder, and a good defender.

Senior Eligibility

[Eso Akunne](#) - C

Eso hasn't played much, mostly in "garbage time", but when he's in there, he has a tendency to fire up 3-pointers every chance he gets.

[Josh Bartelstein](#) - Inc.

Josh has only played in 2 games so far, and hasn't scored yet. He injured his ankle, and is still working back into playing form. He is the captain of the team, and his leadership skills are fine, but he's not having much of a senior season on the floor.

[Corey Person](#) - Inc.

Corey has played in 6 games so far, but all of it has been in "garbage time".

[Matt Vogrich](#) - C-

Matt started the season as a starter, and gave it his best effort, but Nik Stauskas was playing too well to keep him on the bench instead of starting him. Since he's been relegated to the bench, Matt has done less and less with the few minutes he's managed to get on the floor, and now he's only playing during "garbage time". It's a shame, because he can shoot 3-pointers almost as well as Stauskas, but he seems to have lost his touch.

Big Ten Preview

Here are [the current Big Ten standings](#):

Team	Big Ten			Overall		
	Wins	Losses	Percent	Wins	Losses	Percent
Michigan	0	0	0.000	13	0	1.000
Illinois	0	0	0.000	13	1	0.929
Indiana	0	0	0.000	12	1	0.923
Minnesota	0	0	0.000	12	1	0.923
Iowa	0	0	0.000	11	2	0.846
Michigan State	0	0	0.000	11	2	0.846
Ohio State	0	0	0.000	10	2	0.833
Nebraska	0	0	0.000	9	4	0.692
Northwestern	0	0	0.000	9	4	0.692
Wisconsin	0	0	0.000	9	4	0.692
Penn State	0	0	0.000	8	4	0.667
Purdue	0	0	0.000	6	6	0.500

However, I don't expect that order at the end of the season. Here are my predictions:

Team	Big Ten			Overall		
	Wins	Losses	Percent	Wins	Losses	Percent
Indiana	15	3	0.833	27	4	0.871
Michigan	14	4	0.778	27	4	0.871
Ohio State	13	5	0.722	23	7	0.767
Michigan State	12	6	0.667	23	8	0.742
Wisconsin	11	7	0.611	20	11	0.645
Illinois	10	8	0.556	23	9	0.719
Minnesota	8	10	0.444	20	11	0.645
Northwestern	7	11	0.389	16	15	0.516
Iowa	6	12	0.333	17	14	0.548
Purdue	5	13	0.278	11	20	0.355
Penn State	4	14	0.222	12	18	0.400
Nebraska	3	15	0.167	12	19	0.387

Here's Michigan's Big Ten schedule:

Date	Opponent	Location	Time (ET)
01/03/2013 (Thu)	Northwestern	Evanston, IL	7:00 p.m.
01/06/2013 (Sun)	Iowa	Ann Arbor, MI	12:00 p.m.
01/09/2013 (Thu)	Nebraska	Ann Arbor, MI	7:00 p.m.
01/13/2013 (Sun)	Ohio State	Columbus, OH	1:30/4:30 p.m.
01/17/2013 (Thu)	Minnesota	Minneapolis, MN	7:00 p.m.
01/24/2013 (Thu)	Purdue	Ann Arbor, MI	7:00 p.m.
01/27/2013 (Sun)	Illinois	Champaign, IL	6:00 p.m.
01/30/2013 (Wed)	Northwestern	Ann Arbor, MI	6:30 p.m.
02/02/2013 (Sat)	Indiana	Bloomington, IN	9:00 p.m.
02/05/2013 (Tue)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor, MI	9:00 p.m.
02/09/2013 (Sat)	Wisconsin	Madison, WI	12:00 p.m.
02/12/2013 (Tue)	Michigan State	East Lansing, MI	9:00 p.m.
02/17/2013 (Sun)	Penn State	Ann Arbor, MI	12:00 p.m.
02/24/2013 (Sun)	Illinois	Ann Arbor, MI	1:00/4:00/6:00 p.m.
02/27/2013 (Wed)	Penn State	State College, PA	6:30 p.m.
03/02/2013 (Sat) or 03/03/2013 (Sun)	Michigan State	Ann Arbor, MI	5:15 p.m. or 1:00/4:00 p.m.
03/06/2013 (Wed)	Purdue	West Lafayette, IN	7:00 p.m.
03/10/2013 (Sun)	Indiana	Ann Arbor, MI	1:00/4:00/6:00 p.m.

As you can see, there is a really tough 4-game stretch in the middle of the season, starting with the game at Indiana on 02/02, and ending with the game at Michigan State on 02/12. That's 4 tough games in 10 days, 3 of them on the road in the 3 toughest arenas in the Big Ten. If Michigan can win 2 of those 4 games, they'll be in good shape.

Also, every Big Ten team plays 18 conference games, with 7 opponents twice (home and away) and 4 opponents only once. In Michigan's case, the 4 teams they only play once are: Iowa (home), Minnesota (away), Nebraska (home), and Wisconsin (away). Having to play at Wisconsin is a bad break.

For a complete look at the Big Ten schedule this season, check out my [Big Ten Report](#). The first article for this season has been posted today, and there will be a new article every Monday morning until the last Big Ten team has been eliminated from postseason play. Check it out.

This Week

The Big Ten season starts today, and Michigan has two games this week. On Thursday (01/03/2013, 7:00 p.m. EST, ESPN2), Michigan plays at Northwestern, then on Sunday (01/06/2013, 12:00 p.m., BTN), they play Iowa, in Crisler Arena. These are both games that Michigan should win, but every game is a battle in the Big Ten, and every win is precious.

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

Go Blue!