

Nothing But 'Net – Week #18 – 02/25/2013 – Taking Care Of Business

The (#7) University of Michigan men's basketball team only played one game last week, and they "took care of business" by beating a team that they should have beaten. [On Sunday \(02/24/2013\), they beat Illinois 71-58](#) in Crisler Arena. The win raises UM's overall record to 23-4 (10-4 in Big Ten play). They are tied for 3rd place in the Big Ten.

While this was a game that Michigan should have won, it was by no means a "gimme". Illinois is a pretty good team, with a pretty impressive resume on the season. They live and die by the 3-pointer, and that makes them very unpredictable. The Illini started out hot, and had a decent lead (13-5) after 5 minutes. They kept the lead for almost all of the 1st half, and still had an 8-point lead (21-13) with 8 minutes left in the half. Michigan finally woke up, and got their first lead (26-24) with 3:30 left in the half. It was tied (28-28) with 1 second left, when Illinois banked in a 3-pointer to go into halftime with a 3-point lead (31-28). Michigan came out of the locker room more focused, and pulled ahead for good (37-34) with 16:49 left in the game. The Michigan lead grew as high as 9 points (46-37) with 13 minutes left, before Illinois started inching closer. With about 8 minutes left in the game, Illinois got within 4 points (51-47), and got the ball back. Things were looking grim, but Michigan finally started playing like they had during the first 16 games of the season, and pulled away for a comfortable finish. They got the lead as high as 17 points (66-49) with 3:30 left, and coasted home for the win.

This was an important win because it keeps UM as the only team in the Big Ten that is still undefeated at home, and keeps them within striking distance of 1st place. Indiana is still 2 game ahead of them in the standings, but Michigan and Indiana play in Crisler Arena in the final game of the regular season (on March 10th), so Michigan can take care of one of those two games. UM does need help to finish tied for 1st place, but Indiana still has to play at Minnesota and at home vs. Ohio State, so there's still a chance. Of course, Michigan has to win the rest of their games, which isn't going to be easy, but it is doable.

Let's take a quick look at the [stats](#) from this game. Overall, Michigan shot pretty well (25-for-49 = 51.0%), but they didn't shoot very well from 3-point range (6-for-18 = 33.3%). They got to the free throw line pretty often, and made a reasonable percentage of their attempts (15-for-21 = 71.4%). They (barely) won the rebounding battle (29-28), and they won the turnover battle (10-13). Those are decent stats for a solid win over a pretty good opponent.

Individually, 3 players hit double figures:

- [Trey Burke](#) - 26 points (and 8 assists).
- [Tim Hardaway Jr.](#) - 13 points (and 7 rebounds).
- [Glenn Robinson III](#) - 10 points.

The other 2 starters didn't do so well scoring:

- [Mitch McGary](#) - 6 points. Mitch started in place of [Jordan Morgan](#), who is still recovering from his injured ankle.
- [Nik Stauskas](#) - 0 points. This is only the 2nd time Nik has been shut out.

The bench players did a little better this game at scoring:

- [Spike Albrecht](#) - 3 points. It was an important 3-pointer.
- [Jon Horford](#) - 4 points.
- [Caris LeVert](#) - 8 points.
- [Jordan Morgan](#) - 1 point. Jordan still isn't 100% out there.

Getting 16 points of bench scoring is a step in the right direction.

This Week

After a "bye" week with no mid-week game, Michigan is back to the normal 2-games-per-week schedule for the last 2 weeks of the regular season. This week they play at Penn State (Wednesday 02/27/2013, 6:30 p.m., BTN) and home vs. (#4) Michigan State (Sunday 03/03/2013, 4:00 p.m., CBS). They should be able to beat Penn State (everyone else has), but the game vs. MSU will be a real battle. Michigan State dominated UM in East Lansing a few weeks ago, but the hostile crowd in Breslin had a lot to do with that. Things could be very different in Crisler Arena.

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

Go Blue!