

Nothing But 'Net – Week #08 – 12/16/2013 – Not Again

I'm really getting tired of this crap. This is getting to be too much of a pattern: Michigan plays a great game against a superior opponent, and looks like they're FINALLY going to win the big game, only to lose in the last few moments. Examples: the national championship basketball game against Louisville last April, the Ohio State football game a few weeks ago, and the [basketball game vs. \(#1\) Arizona on Saturday \(12/14/2013\)](#). I'm tired of moral victories. I'm tired of "so close". At some point, Michigan has to break through and start winning these games.

After starting the season ranked in the Top-10, Michigan slipped after losses to Iowa State and Charlotte, and finally dropped out of the Top-25 completely last week after losing to Duke. They were facing the new #1 team in the country, Arizona. They played very well, just not well enough to beat Arizona. They led for almost the whole game, but lost the lead and the game in the last minute. The final score was 72-70. Michigan's record drops to 6-4.

It's hard to be too critical of UM, since they were playing the #1 team in the nation, but there were certainly things that Michigan could have done better. They gave up way too many offensive rebounds for 2nd (and 3rd and 4th) chance points, and they were a lot sloppier with the ball than usual. They had a nice lead (58-50) with 7:00 to go, and [Caris LeVert](#) tried an open 3-pointer. If it had dropped, the momentum might just have been enough to carry UM to victory. Instead, it rimmed out, and that was the ball game. Arizona went on a 13-4 run, and once they got the lead, UM started panicking. Still, they had a great chance to win the game in the closing seconds, but they misplayed it badly. With 24 seconds left, Michigan had the ball, down 1 point (67-55) with the shot clock turned off. Conventional wisdom says that they run the clock down to 2 seconds, then run their best play to get a great shot to win the game. Instead, [Nik Stauskas](#) took a low-percentage long 2-pointer with 11 seconds left, and he missed it. Even if he had hit it, Arizona would have had the last shot. It was a dumb move, and it cost Michigan the game.

The [stats](#) tell the story: Michigan shot well, better than Arizona, but they got hammered on the boards. They were out-rebounded 37-24, and they gave up 17 offensive rebounds. They also lost the turnover battle 11-9. It didn't help that Arizona hit 14 of 15 free-throw attempts. The only one they missed, they missed on purpose, so UM couldn't set up a good tying 3-point attempt at the buzzer.

Individually, 4 Michigan players hit double figures:

- [Spike Albrecht](#) - 10 points. [Derrick Walton Jr.](#) was ineffective, so Spike ran the team for most of the game. He hit 3-for-4 of his 3-pointers, along with 4 assists.
- [Caris LeVert](#) - 15 points. Caris kept Michigan in the game in the 2nd half, after a quiet 1st half. He wasn't very efficient though: 6-for-15 shooting.
- [Glenn Robinson III](#) - 20 points. GR3 kept Michigan in the game in the 1st half, but he had a quiet 2nd half. He was very efficient: 8-for-9 shooting.
- [Nik Stauskas](#) - 14 points. Nik had a rough time shooting: 4-for-11, including 1-for-4 from 3-point range. He was the leading rebounder for Michigan, with 6 boards.

3 other players scored, but not in double figures:

- [Jon Horford](#) - 2 points. Jon didn't score many points, but he played great defense, especially in the 1st half. He had 4 of Michigan's 6 blocked shots, along with 4 rebounds and a steal.
- [Mitch McGary](#) - 8 points. Mitch had a tough time with Arizona's height underneath.
- [Derrick Walton Jr.](#) - 1 point. Derrick played like a true freshman, so he sat for most of the game. He only played 14 minutes. Spike, Caris, and Nik shared point guard duties in his absence.

[Zak Irvin](#) and [Jordan Morgan](#) played, but did not score.

This Week

Once again, Michigan only plays one game this week: on Saturday (12/21/2013, 8:30 p.m., Fox Sports 1) they play Stanford in the [Barclays Center](#) in Brooklyn, NY. This game is part of the [Brooklyn Hoops Holiday Invitational](#). Stanford is a solid team, currently 7-2, with some quality wins and no embarrassing losses. This is a good matchup for Michigan, and it could go either way. Check back next week to see what happened, and why.

Go Blue!