

Nothing But 'Net – Week #13 – 01/20/2014 – A Great Week!

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, and they won both of them. [On Tuesday \(01/14/2014\), they beat Penn State 80-67 in Crisler Arena](#), then [on Saturday \(01/18/2014\), they beat \(#3\) Wisconsin in Madison](#). The wins raise Michigan's record to 13-4 (5-0 in the Big Ten).

Well. I don't know if I can explain just how big and exciting and important the win over Wisconsin is. It's right up there with [the win over Michigan State in East Lansing in 2011](#) and [the win against Kansas in the NCAA Tournament last year](#). First of all, it's the highest ranked team that Michigan has beaten on their home floor, ever. It also is the first time Michigan has won in Madison since 1999. Wisconsin is virtually unbeatable at home, going 191-18 since Bo Ryan started coaching there in 2001. Trust me, this is a huge win, and it makes the rest of Michigan's schedule look a little less daunting. Sure, there are still many tough games ahead, but if you can win at the Kohl Center, you can beat anyone, anywhere.

Oh yeah: Michigan also beat Penn State, but that's not as big a deal. Penn State is now 0-6 in the Big Ten, and Michigan beat them in Ann Arbor. UM looked OK in the PSU game, scoring the first 8 points, and leading by as many as 14 points in the 1st half, before settling for a 7-point lead (40-33) at halftime. In the 2nd half, they let PSU back into the game, letting the lead slip to just 2 points (47-45) with 15 minutes to go. Michigan buckled down, and took control again, pushing the lead up to 16 points (66-50) with 9:42 left. Penn State tried to come back one more time, and got within 8 points (72-64) with 5 minutes left, but UM pushed the lead back up to double digits again, and won going away. Michigan never trailed in the game.

In the Wisconsin game, Michigan only trailed twice (2-0 and 4-2), but once they got the lead at 7-4, they never trailed. They managed to get the lead up to double digits (43-33) late in the 1st half, but had to settle for a 5-point lead at halftime (43-38). They started the 2nd half strong, and pushed the lead up to 15 points (59-44) with 11:46 left, and still led by 13 points (66-53) with 8 minutes to go. That's when Wisconsin made their big move, and cut the lead down to 1 point (68-67) with 1:54 left. Michigan played tough down the stretch, made their free throws, and held on for a huge victory.

The [stats for the Penn State game](#) are solid. Michigan shot well overall (28-for-52 = 53.8%), they shot 3-pointers pretty well (9-for-24 = 37.5%), and they shot free throws pretty well (15-for-19 = 78.9%). They (barely) won the rebounding battle (28-26), and they won the turnover battle (6-9). 6 turnovers for a whole game is very impressive.

The [stats for the Wisconsin game](#) are even more impressive. Michigan shot well overall (29-for-53 = 54.7%), they shot 3-pointers very well (7-for-13 = 53.8%), and they shot free throws very well (12-for-14 = 85.7%). They (barely) won the rebounding battle (31-30), but they lost the turnover battle (11-9). The key stat here is 3-point shooting. Michigan can beat just about anyone when they shoot over 50% from 3-point range.

Individually, 2 Michigan players hit double figures in both games:

- [Glenn Robinson III](#) – 15 points vs. PSU, and 14 points vs. UW. GR3 was very efficient in the Wisconsin game, shooting 6-for-8.
- [Nik Stauskas](#) – 21 and 23 points. Nik was the star, and leading scorer, in both games. In the Wisconsin game, he hit a 3-pointer to push Michigan's lead back up to 4 when UW closed to within 1 point, then he hit all his free throws down the stretch to seal the win.

3 other players hit double figures in one of the two games:

- [Jon Horford](#) – 11 and 6 points. Once again, Jon was one half of a "center by committee" with [Jordan Morgan](#), and they got the job done. Jon also had 7 rebounds in each game.

- [Caris LeVert](#) – 6 and 20 points. Caris played a big part in the Wisconsin win, hitting all 3 of his 3-point attempts.
- [Derrick Walton Jr.](#) – 16 and 2 points. Derrick had the best game of his young career vs. Penn State. 16 points is a new career high for him.

3 players scored in at least one game, but didn't hit double figures:

- [Spike Albrecht](#) – 3 and 4 points. Spike has had exactly one 3-pointer in every Big Ten game except the first one (Minnesota).
- [Zak Irvin](#) - 0 and 2 points. Since the Minnesota game, where he had 15 points, Zak has disappeared, with 5, 0, 0, and 2 points. Michigan needs him to get his 3-point shot back.
- [Jordan Morgan](#) – 8 and 6 points. Jordan was the leading rebounder for Michigan in the Wisconsin game, with 8.

[Max Bielfeldt](#) played (barely - 1 minute) in the Wisconsin game, but didn't score.

This Week

Michigan has just entered "The Gauntlet" portion of their schedule. The Wisconsin game was just the first of 3 games in a row against Top-25 teams, 2 of them on the road. They play two games this week. On Wednesday (01/22/2014, 7:00 p.m., BTN) they play (#20) Iowa in Crisler Arena, then on Saturday (01/25/2014, 7:00 p.m., ESPN) they play at (#5) Michigan State. Both games are going to be very tough. Iowa was mediocre last season (25-13 overall, 9-9 in the Big Ten, NIT), but they are very much improved this season (15-3, 4-1 in the Big Ten). Michigan throttled them (95-67) in Ann Arbor in their only meeting last year. I don't expect anything like that this year. Then there's the game in East Lansing. It's every bit as tough to win in Breslin as it is to win in the Kohl Center. Once again, it's not impossible for UM to beat MSU on their home floor (they did it 3 years ago), but Michigan will have to play flawlessly, again.

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

Go Blue!