

Nothing But 'Net – Week #20 – 03/10/2014 – Outright Big Ten Champs!

The (#12) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, and they won both of them. [On Tuesday \(03/04/2014\), they beat Illinois 84-53 in Champaign](#), then [on Saturday \(03/08/2014\), they beat Indiana 84-80 in Crisler Arena](#). The wins raise Michigan's record to 23-7 (15-3 in the Big Ten). With the win over Illinois, Michigan clinched the outright Big Ten championship, for the first time since the 1985-1986 season! With the win over Indiana, Michigan beat every other Big Ten team this season, something no other team did this season. The last time Michigan beat every other Big Ten team was in 1992. Finally, the win gave Michigan a 13-2 record at home this season, and an even more impressive record of 45-4 at home over the last 3 seasons.

Coming into the Illinois game, Illinois had won 3 in a row, and had held their last 4 opponents under 50 points. The experts were predicting a close, low scoring game. Well, no. Michigan raced out to a quick 10 point lead (23-13) with 11:09 left in the half, and never looked back. They had already broken the 50-point barrier at halftime (52-30), and they just kept building on the lead the whole game. The largest lead was 33 points (76-43) with 5:44 left in the game, before they settled for a 31 point victory. It was a thorough butt whipping for Illinois, and there was no question who the better team was.

Even though Michigan had secured the outright Big Ten championship in the Illinois game, they still had plenty to play for in the last game of the season against Indiana. We owed Indiana, big-time. IU had beaten Michigan 3 games in a row, including 2 very important games last year. The first time Michigan played Indiana last season, in Bloomington, Michigan (20-1) came into the game ranked #1 in the nation, and lost 81-73. Then, the 2 teams met again on Senior Night in Ann Arbor, and IU won again, 72-71, when Michigan missed a layup at the buzzer that would have won the game and earned UM a share of the Big Ten title. Instead, we got to watch IU celebrate their outright championship on our floor. Ugh. Finally, Michigan went to Bloomington on 02/02/2014 with a perfect 9-0 record, and lost 63-52. But the most important reason that Michigan had to beat Indiana: it was Senior Night, and they couldn't let [Jordan Morgan](#) go out with a loss in his last home game.

So, yeah, Michigan owed Indiana, and they beat them, but it wasn't easy. IU started the game on fire, hitting 11 of their first 12 shots. At that point, it was a 7 point Indiana lead (26-19), with 10:57 left in the half. IU cooled down, a little, and Michigan clawed their way back to within 2 points (32-30), with 3:03 left in the half. However, IU went on a 10-6 run to end the half up 6 points (42-36). In the 2nd half, it took Michigan just over 4 minutes to finally get the lead, 50-48, and they never trailed again. IU tied it up (50-50), but Michigan slowly pulled away, and had a decent lead (73-62) with 4:55 left in the game. Indiana went on a quick 9-0 run to make it a 2-point game (73-71) with 2:39 left, then tied it up (75-75) with 1:25 left. [Glenn Robinson III](#) hit a huge 3-pointer to put UM ahead for good, and Michigan hit 14 free throws in a row to preserve the win.

After the game, the team stayed out on the court, and they got to celebrate their outright Big Ten championship on their home court in front of their loyal fans as the confetti and streamers fell from the rafters. [Coach Beilein](#) and some of the players said a few words, then the whole team cut down the net in the south end of the arena. It was a wonderful experience.

Stats? Stats! Since the [Illinois game](#) was a butt-whipping, the stats are lots of fun. Michigan shot pretty well overall (29-for-51 = 56.9%), but they shot very well from 3-point range (16-for-23 = 69.6%). They shot free throws well enough (10-for-14 = 71.4%), they crushed Illinois on the boards (33-23), but they lost the turnover battle (10-8).

The stats for the [Indiana game](#) are much less impressive. Michigan shot the ball fairly well overall (27-for-56 = 48.2%), but they had a tough time shooting 3-pointers (4-for-15 = 26.7%). When Michigan isn't shooting 3-pointers well, they just look bad. They shot free throws very well (26-for-29 = 89.7%), but they lost the rebounding battle (barely, 26-25), and won the turnover battle (6-15).

Individually, 3 Michigan players hit double figures in both games:

- [Caris LeVert](#) - 15 points vs. Illinois and 13 points vs. Indiana..
- [Glenn Robinson III](#) - 13 and 20 points.
- [Nik Stauskas](#) - 24 and 21 points. Nik was the leading scorer for Michigan in both games. Indiana had shut him down in the first meeting this season, but not this time.

[Jordan Morgan](#) hit double figures (15 points) in the Indiana game, but only scored 4 points vs. Illinois. However, he was the star of the Indiana game, on Senior Night, with 10 rebounds for a double-double. He also scored Michigan's first 6 points in the game.

5 other players scored in at least one game, just not in double figures:

- [Spike Albrecht](#) - 6 and 4 points.
- [Jon Horford](#) - 2 and 4 points. Jon also had 10 rebounds vs. Illinois.
- [Zak Irvin](#) - 9 and 3 points.
- [Sean Loneragan](#) - 2 and DNP.
- [Derrick Walton Jr.](#) - 9 and 4 points. Derrick led the team in assists in both games (5 and 4).

[Brad Anlauf](#), [Andrew Dakich](#), and [Max Bielfeldt](#) all played in the Illinois game, but didn't score.

This Week

This week, Michigan plays in the [Big Ten Tournament](#), in Indianapolis. They are the #1 seed, and since the top 4 seeds get Thursday off, they don't play until Friday (03/14/2014, noon EDT, ESPN/ESPN2) against the winner of the (#8 seed) Indiana vs. (#9 seed) Illinois game. Since they played (and beat) both Illinois and Indiana last week, they should be ready for either of them. If they win the game on Friday, they keep on playing. The complete bracket is [here](#).

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

Go Blue!