

Nothing But 'Net – Week #07 – 12/14/2015 – The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly

This was a week of good, bad, and ugly (in reverse order):

- The good – The University of Michigan men's basketball team [beat Delaware State 80-33 on Saturday \(12/12/2015\)](#) in Crisler Arena.
- The bad – Senior co-captain and crowd favorite [Spike Albrecht retired from basketball, effective immediately, on Friday \(12/11/2015\)](#), due to his continuing hip problems.
- The ugly – [Michigan got thumped at \(#19\) Southern Methodist \(SMU\) on Tuesday \(12/08/2015\), 82-58](#). The loss and the win leave Michigan with a record of 7-3.

All in all, it was an eventful week, although most of the news was bad.

The loss at SMU was very disheartening. UM had won 4 games in a row going into the SMU game, including a couple against decent competition (Texas and NC State), but they were completely outplayed, outmuscled, outshot, and outhustled by SMU. Michigan actually had a small lead (11-7) with 13:18 left in the 1st half, before SMU got warmed up. Still, UM was only down 3 points (21-18) with 4:00 left in the half, when SMU went on a crushing 15-4 run to end the half, up 14 (36-22). Michigan managed to cut into the lead a little at the start of the 2nd half, and got as close as 8 points (43-35) with 16:37 left in the game, before SMU pushed the lead back up to double figures, and never let UM get closer than 10 points the rest of the way. It was a dominating performance by SMU, and Michigan was never really in the game for the last 24 minutes.

The win over Delaware State was actually pretty lackluster. DSU is a terrible team, and there was no doubt that UM would beat them handily, it was more a matter of how sharp the Wolverines would look. The answer: sharp as a marble. It was a dreary, sloppy game, with boatloads of mistakes by both teams. DSU gave Michigan dozens of chances to look good, and UM threw most of them away. Way too many dumb turnovers, missed open shots, and mental mistakes. Michigan led the whole way, and once they pushed the lead into double figures (15-5, with 13:14 to go in the 1st half), they never let DSU any closer. The halftime score was 38-18, and with 7:00 left in the game the score was 66-21. Yes, DSU only scored 3 points in the first 13:08 of the 2nd half. It was a laugher.

Spike. What can I say? He will be missed, not just as a player, but as a leader. He's a great guy, a really nice guy, and it's a shame that his career ended with a whimper instead of a bang. He played all last season with injured hips, and he had double hip surgery over the summer. He hoped that he would be recovered and rehabbed enough to play this season, but it was obvious that he was struggling out there. He will be missed.

So, what did we learn about this season's UM team this week? We learned that they are a long way from being a good team. They have the components they need to succeed, but they certainly don't have the confidence or the mental toughness, yet.

Stats

The [stats for the SMU game](#) are sad, oh so sad. UM shot very poorly overall (21-for-60 = 35.0%), they shot 3-pointers very poorly (10-for-36 = 27.8%), and they even shot free throws poorly (6-for-12 = 50.0%). They were thoroughly embarrassed on the boards (20-45), but they did win the turnover battle (10-17). Yay?

The [stats for the DSU game](#) are better, but still not very impressive. UM shot pretty well overall (32-for-61 = 52.5%), they shot 3-pointers pretty well (11-for-27 = 40.7%), but they still shot free throws poorly (5-for-10 = 50.0%). They won the rebounding battle (41-29) and the turnover battle (7-17). Against a weak opponent like DSU, they should have had even better stats than this.

[Derrick Walton Jr.](#) missed both games this week with his ankle injury, so [Coach Beilein](#) had to change the starting lineup again. In the SMU game, he used the same lineup as the previous

game (Houston Baptist): [Muhammad-Ali Abdur-Rahkman](#) (MAAR), [Aubrey Dawkins](#), [Ricky Doyle](#), [Zak Irvin](#), and [Caris LeVert](#). For the DSU game, he started [Duncan Robinson](#) instead of Dawkins.

MAAR was the only starter to hit double figures in both games this week, with 15 points vs. SMU and 11 vs. DSU. Robinson hit double figures in both games as well, but he was a bench player vs. SMU, and a starter vs. DSU. He had 15 and 11. Dawkins had 5 points as a starter vs. SMU, and 5 points as a bench player vs. DSU. All 5 of the starters in the DSU game hit double figures. Doyle had 10 points (along with 4 vs. SMU), Irvin had 12 (9 vs. SMU), and LeVert had 15 (5 vs. SMU). Before we go any further, let's look at that last stat: LeVert had 5 points vs. SMU on 1-for-13 shooting (0-for-6 from 3-point range, 3-for-6 at the free throw line). That's terrible. The team needs a lot more from him.

The bench chipped in a bit of scoring this week, mostly in the DSU game. As I mentioned above, Robinson scored 15 points vs. SMU as a bench player, and Dawkins had 5 points as a bench player vs. DSU. [Kameron Chatman](#) was the only other bench player to hit double figures this week, with 10 points vs. DSU (and 2 vs. SMU). Albrecht hit a 3-pointer in his last game as a Wolverine vs. SMU, and that was it for bench scoring vs. SMU. [Moritz Wagner](#) had 2 points vs. DSU, and 0 vs. SMU. [Andrew Dakich](#) had to "burn his redshirt" when Spike retired, and he scored 4 points vs. DSU in his first action this season. [Mark Donnal](#) played in both games, and failed to score. [DJ Wilson](#) played (and failed to score) in the SMU game, but sat out the DSU game with a sprained ankle.

This Week

This week, Michigan plays two games. On Tuesday (12/15/2015, 7:00 p.m., BTN), they play Northern Kentucky, then on Saturday (12/19/2015, 6:00 p.m., ESPN3), they play Youngstown State. Both games are in Crisler Arena. Both teams are "cupcakes", and should be easy wins.

Come by Crisler for the games, and check back next week to see what happened, and why.

Go Blue!