

Nothing But 'Net – Week #17 – 02/22/2016 – Another Lost Week

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, and they lost both of them. [On Tuesday \(02/16/2016\), they lost at Ohio State 76-66](#), then [on Sunday \(02/21/2016\), they lost at \(#6\) Maryland 86-82](#). The two losses drop Michigan's record to 19-9 (9-6 in the Big Ten).

Neither of these losses is particularly surprising. It's always tough to win on the road in the Big Ten, and Columbus and College Park are two of the tougher places to play. In fact, Maryland has only lost one home Big Ten game since they joined the Big Ten 2 years ago. Michigan looked tired and lost in the game at OSU, but they put up a good fight in a losing cause at Maryland. Still a loss is a loss, and Michigan just picked up two more of them.

At this point, Michigan is solidly "on the bubble" for getting into the NCAA Tournament. They weren't expected to win either of the road games this week, and they're not expected to win at Wisconsin next week (see below) or at home vs. Iowa in 2 weeks, but they do have to beat Northwestern at home next week (see below), and probably win at least one game in the Big Ten Tournament.

There was an important milestone in the Maryland game, and it wasn't a good one: up until that game, Michigan was 50-0 in games coached by [John Beilein](#) where they scored at least 80 points. They scored 82 vs. Maryland, but they lost.

Michigan hung around for most of the 1st half in the OSU game, with a couple early leads (9-7 and 12-10). They were within 2 points (29-27) with 2:24 left in the half, before OSU went on a 7-1 run to end the half, up by 8 points (36-28). UM got as close as 4 points early in the 2nd half (36-32), and then OSU pushed the lead up into double digits and kept it there for most of the rest of the game. UM's last gasp was when they got within 7 points (64-57) with 4:52 left in the game, but OSU never let them get any closer. It was a pretty discouraging loss, because Michigan didn't show any fight. They just sleepwalked to another loss.

Michigan played with much more intensity and mental toughness against Maryland. They had a couple small early leads (3-0, 3-2, 5-4, and 8-7), and it was all tied up (12-12) with 14:35 left in the 1st half. Over the next seven minutes, Maryland went on a 17-1 run, and it was 29-13. Michigan could have just folded their tents and gone home at that point, but they hung in there and kept clawing their way back. They were only down 5 points (41-36) at halftime, and they finally got the lead back (49-48) with 16:24 left in the game. Maryland went on a quick 18-9 run to go back in front 66-58 with 12:11 left, but Michigan wasn't done yet. They tied it up (72-72) with 6:34 left, and actually led by 3 points (75-72) a minute later. That was the last time they led, as Maryland closed out the game strong. Michigan got within 2 points (84-82) with 7 seconds left, but Maryland made their free throws, and that was the game.

So, what did we learn about this season's UM team this week? We learned that they don't have the firepower to beat the better teams in the league on the road.

Stats

The [stats for the OSU game](#) are pretty sad. Michigan shot very poorly overall (23-for-59 = 39.0%), they shot 3-pointers horribly (5-for-24 = 20.8%), although they did shoot free throws well enough (15-for-18 = 83.3%). They won the rebounding battle (34-31), and tied in the turnover battle (9-9). Their poor 3-point shooting doomed them in this game.

The [stats for the Maryland game](#) are much better. Michigan shot pretty well overall (32-for-68 = 47.1%), they shot 3-pointers pretty well (13-for-27 = 48.1%), but they didn't shoot free throws very well (5-for-8 = 62.5%). They narrowly lost the rebounding battle (33-30), and they won the turnover battle (16-18). Still, 16 turnovers is pretty bad. The deciding factor in this game was free throws. Maryland got to the line a lot more than Michigan (19 times), and they made most of them (17-for-19 = 89.5%).

Remember last week when I was all excited about [Caris LeVert](#) returning to play vs. Purdue? Well, the news since then isn't so good. He hasn't played in a game since then, and there's talk that he may be done for the season. We'll see.

With LeVert unavailable again, Coach Beilein went with his regular starting lineup: [Muhammad-Ali Abdur-Rahkman](#) (MAAR), [Mark Donnal](#), [Zak Irvin](#), [Duncan Robinson](#), and [Derrick Walton Jr.](#) Three of the starters hit double figures in both games: Donnal (17 and 25), Irvin (15 and 11), and Walton (13 and 14). The other two starters both hit double figures in the Maryland game, so all five starters hit double figures in that game. MAAR had 9 and 16 points, and Robinson had 3 and 10. Walton also had 5 fouls in the Maryland game, becoming the first Michigan player to foul out of a game this season. Michigan is the most disqualification adverse team in the country; every other team has already had at least one disqualification this season.

The bench didn't contribute very many points this week:

- [Kameron Chatman](#) didn't play in the OSU game and had 6 points in the Maryland game, going 2-for-2 from 3-point range.
- [Andrew Dakich](#) played in both games, and failed to score in either.
- [Aubrey Dawkins](#) had 3 and 0 points.
- [Ricky Doyle](#) had 4 and 0 points.
- [Moritz Wagner](#) didn't play in the OSU game, and failed to score in the Maryland game.
- [DJ Wilson](#) had 2 and 0 points.

A little quick addition shows that the bench chipped in 15 points all week, and only Chatman scored in the Maryland game. Once again, Michigan needs more bench scoring.

This Week

This week, Michigan plays two more Big Ten games, one at home and one on the road. On Wednesday (02/24/2016, 7:00 p.m., BTN), they play [Northwestern](#) in Crisler Arena, then on Sunday (02/28/2016, 6:00 p.m. EST, BTN), they play at [Wisconsin](#).

Northwestern is currently 17-10 (5-9 in the Big Ten), with a few respectable wins (Missouri, Virginia Tech, and Wisconsin), and only one bad loss (home vs. Penn State). They are actually close to being on the bubble for the NCAA Tournament. This looked like a solid UM win earlier, but now it looks more like a toss-up game.

Wisconsin is also 17-10, but they're 9-5 in the Big Ten. They had a miserable start, with some embarrassing losses (Western Illinois, Milwaukee, and Northwestern), but they turned things around lately, and they've won 8 of their last 9 games, including wins over Michigan State, Indiana, Ohio State, and at Maryland (Maryland's only Big Ten home loss). It's very hard to win in Madison, and I expect a game a lot like the recent UM/Maryland game, hopefully with a better result.

Come on down to Crisler on Wednesday and tune by on Sunday, then check back next week to see what happened, and why.

Go Blue!