

## Nothing But 'Net – Week #07 – 12/12/2016 – Holding Even

### Quick Look

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games last week, and they won one and lost one. [On Tuesday \(12/06/2016\), Michigan beat Texas 53-50](#) in Crisler Arena, then [on Saturday \(12/10/2016\), they lost at \(#2\) UCLA 102-84](#). The win and the loss leave Michigan with a record of 7-3.

### What Happened

After losing ground two weeks ago, Michigan broke even last week. They still aren't looking very cohesive, but at least they showed a little backbone last week. They were expected to beat Texas in Crisler, and they did, although it was a lot closer and harder than expected. They were expected to lose at UCLA, and they did, but they hung with UCLA a lot longer and a lot better than expected, before falling apart at the end. In both games, Michigan played a lot better in the 1<sup>st</sup> half than in the 2<sup>nd</sup>. They got away with it, barely, vs. Texas, but they couldn't keep up with UCLA.

The Texas game was close for the first 8:00, before Michigan went on a 9-0 run to go up by 10, 21-11, with 9:53 left. They still led by 9 (31-22) with 1:56 left in the half, before falling apart and letting Texas back in the game. They let Texas go on a 6-0 run to end the half, with their lead cut to 3 points (31-28). Michigan had a slow start to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, and Texas pulled ahead 40-37 with 14:03 left in the game. The rest of the way, the lead went back and forth, with neither team able to pull more than 3 points ahead. Texas led by 2 (50-48) with 1:56 left, but Michigan scored the last 5 points to win by 3.

It was an ugly game, with poor shooting and lots of turnovers. Still, an ugly win is much better than a pretty loss, like the UCLA game. Even though Michigan lost by 18 points, and gave up over 100 points, it was still a "pretty loss", thanks to a wild 1<sup>st</sup> half. UM started the game on fire, hitting 12 of their first 15 3-point shots. They actually led UCLA by 7 points (48-41) with 1:22 left in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, then they fell apart, again. They let UCLA go on a 9-2 run to end the half tied 50-50. UCLA kept the run going, and started the 2<sup>nd</sup> half with a 10-2 run, which was all the lead they needed, 60-52. Michigan hung around for quite a while, and only trailed by 5 points (77-72) with 8:06 left in the game. They still stood a chance, but UCLA outscored them 25-12 from that point, to win by 18.

Michigan didn't shoot very well vs. Texas (41.7%, 31.6% from 3-point range), but they shot a little better than Texas, and that was enough to win a close game. Rebounds were close (28-31), and so were turnovers (12-14). The difference was at the free throw line: UM got there more often (7-for-11 vs. 5-for-6), and those 2 extra points were most of the difference. Here are [the complete stats for the Texas game](#).

[The stats for the UCLA game](#) are amazing. Looking at just the UM numbers, it's hard to believe they lost by 18: 29-for-58 (50.0%) shooting overall, 14-for-26 (53.8%) shooting from 3-point range, and 12-for-13 (92.3%) from the free throw line. However UCLA's numbers are even more impressive: 39-for-58 (67.2%), 15-for-24 (62.5%), and 9-for-18 (50.0%). UCLA won the rebounding battle decisively (30-23), but turnovers were even (8-8).

### Who Looked Good

[Moritz Wagner](#) is turning into the "go to" player for Michigan this season. He was the leading scorer for Michigan vs. Texas, with 15 points, and he hit double figures again vs. UCLA, with 11 points. He had foul trouble (4) vs. UCLA, which limited his minutes (20), but he still played well when he was in.

[Duncan Robinson](#) was the only other player to hit double figures in both games, with 12 and 13. He still isn't hitting his 3-pointers like he used to (2-for-6 and 2-for-4), but he's scoring in other ways, and providing a nice scoring threat off the bench.

[DJ Wilson](#) had a solid week, with 13 points (and a team-high 6 rebounds) vs. Texas, and 8 points vs. UCLA. He hit 2-for-2 and 2-for-3 from 3-point range.

[Zak Irvin](#) had a lousy game vs. Texas (3 points and 3 turnovers), but he bounced back nicely vs. UCLA, with 18 points, 5 rebounds, and only 1 turnover.

[Muhammad-Ali Abdur-Rahkman](#) also had a lousy game vs. Texas (3 points, all free throws), but did much better vs. UCLA, with 11 points.

[Mark Donnal](#) was another player who had a lousy game vs. Texas (0 points), but he scored 12 points (on 5-for-5 shooting, including 2-for-2 from 3-point range) vs. UCLA.

### **Who Looked Not-So-Good**

[Derrick Walton Jr.](#) had 2 mediocre games, with 7 and 9 points. He didn't shoot well (3-for-9 and 2-for-7), and he had more turnovers (7) than assists (4) for the week.

[Xavier Simpson](#) played in both games, but failed to score.

### **Who Else Played**

Since the Texas game was so tense and tight, [Coach Beilein](#) didn't play any of the subs and scrubs, but once the UCLA game got out of hand, he put them in. [Ibi Watson](#) was the only player to score, with 2 points. [Sean Lonergan](#), [Jon Teske](#), and [Fred Wright-Jones](#) all played, but failed to score.

### **Who Didn't Play**

[Brent Hibbitts](#) didn't get into either game.

### **The Big Picture**

Once again, Michigan couldn't put two good halves together in either game. They got away with it vs. Texas, but they got hammered in the last 8 minutes of the UCLA game. They have shown us that they have the talent to play with anyone, they just need to figure out how to maintain the effort for 40 minutes.

### **What's Next**

This week Michigan plays two more games, both in Crisler Arena. On Tuesday (12/13/2016, 9:00 p.m., BTN), Michigan plays Central Arkansas, then on Saturday (12/17/2016, 3:00 p.m., BTN), Michigan plays Maryland Eastern Shore. These are both "guarantee" games against cupcakes, and Michigan should win both games easily.

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

Go Blue!