

Nothing But 'Net – Week #08 – 12/19/2016 – A Couple Christmas Cupcakes

Quick Look

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games last week, and they won them both. [On Tuesday \(12/13/2016\), Michigan beat Central Arkansas 97-53](#), then [on Saturday \(12/17/2016\), they beat Maryland Eastern Shore 98-49](#). Both games were in Crisler Arena. The two wins raise Michigan's record to 9-3.

What Happened

Michigan easily took care of a pair of "cupcakes" to pad their record and boost their stats. They also managed to get some playing time for the two freshmen who don't play as often. They were both fun, easy games, where the final outcome was decided by halftime, and the (sparse) crowds were able to relax and enjoy the glorified scrimmages.

Michigan led from start to finish in both games, with good starts (15-5 vs. UCA, and 19-2 vs. MDES), good leads at halftime (49-20 and 49-22), and good "largest margins" (44 and 50 points). Michigan shot well overall in both games (32-for-62 = 51.6% vs. UCA, 34-for-52 = 65.4% vs. MDES), they shot 3-pointers very well in both games (19-for-45 = 42.2% and 12-for-21 = 57.1%), and they shot free throws well enough in both games (14-for-18 = 77.8% and 18-for-26 = 69.2%). They outrebounded both opponents by a wide margin (36-27 and 35-26), and they won the turnover battle in both games (6-14 and 9-15). It was total domination. Here are the complete stats for [UCA](#) and [MDES](#).

Did you notice the 3-point numbers for the UCA game? Both 19 made 3-pointers and 45 attempts are new single-game school records. It was fun to watch.

Who Looked Good

[DJ Wilson](#) hit double figures in both games (11 and 16 points), and chipped in 7 and 6 rebounds. He's looking very good out there so far this season.

[Zak Irvin](#) also hit double figures in both games (16 and 11), along with 6 rebounds in each game.

[Duncan Robinson](#) was the 3rd player to hit double figures in both games (12 and 17). He came off the bench in the UCA game, but he started in the MDES game (due to a "clerical error"). He shot his 3-pointers pretty well: 4-for-9 and 3-for-6.

[Derrick Walton Jr.](#) almost had double figures in both games: 9 and 21. He didn't shoot very well vs. UCA (2-for-7), but he was on fire vs. MDES (7-for-9, including 5-for-7 from 3-point range).

[Moritz Wagner](#) also just missed hitting double figures in both games (18 and 9). He had almost perfect shooting for the week: 8-for-9 and 4-for-4.

[Muhammad-Ali Abdur-Rahkman](#) had a pretty good week scoring (14 and 7), but he also chipped in 4 assists vs. UCA and a career-high 10 assists vs. MDES.

[Xavier Simpson](#) finally scored a few points: 7 and 4. He's starting to look a little more comfortable out there.

Who Looked Not-So-Good

[Mark Donnal](#) had a quiet week, with 0 and 5 points.

Who Else Played

[Ibi Watson](#) played in both games, and had 3 and 4 points. He is still struggling with his 3-point shot (1-for-15), but he finally hit his first one in the UCA game.

[Jon Teske](#) is starting to get more playing time, but he still isn't looking very comfortable out there. He had 2 and 0 points. He hit his first career basket vs. UCA.

[Sean Loneragan](#) scored 2 and 1 points.

[Fred Wright-Jones](#) scored 0 and 3 points. He hit his first career 3-pointer vs. MDES.

[Brent Hibbitts](#) scored 3 and 0 points. He hit his first career 3-pointer vs. UCA.

Who Didn't Play

Since both games were blowouts, everybody played.

The Big Picture

It's not clear how much we can learn about the team from these "guarantee" games against overmatched opponents. It was fun to watch them run around and score and hit lots of 3-pointers, but the Big Ten games aren't going to look anything like that.

What's Next

This week Michigan only plays one game, due to finals and the holidays. On Thursday (12/22/2016, 7:00 p.m., BTN), Michigan plays Furman in Crisler Arena. This is their last non-conference game. Furman isn't very good, but they're a lot better than Central Arkansas and Maryland Eastern Shore. Michigan will have to play a solid game to beat them.

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

Go Blue!