

## **Nothing But 'Net – Week #11 – 01/09/2017 – Trending The Wrong Way**

### **Quick Look**

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games last week, and they won one and lost the other. [On Wednesday \(01/04/2017\), Michigan beat Penn State 72-69](#), then [on Saturday \(01/07/2017\), they lost to Maryland 77-70](#). Both games were in Crisler Arena. The win and the loss leave Michigan with a record of 11-5 (1-2 in the Big Ten).

### **What Happened**

Just 3 games into the Big Ten season, it's obvious that Michigan has taken a step backwards from last season's team, and is trending in the wrong direction. Sure, they beat PSU, but they were expected to beat them; the real indicator was how they would do in a tough "toss-up" game vs. Maryland, and they didn't look good.

Actually, Michigan hasn't looked good since their last two "cupcake" games (Central Arkansas and Maryland Eastern Shore). They looked pretty weak in their last non-conference game (Furman) and all 3 of their Big Ten games (Iowa, PSU, and Maryland). For the first 30 minutes of the PSU game, they made Penn State look like Duke. Fortunately, UM woke up just in time in that game, and managed to come back just enough to win. Not so in the other 2 Big Ten games. Michigan has been playing from behind a lot this season, and they have 5 losses to show for it.

UM fell behind early to PSU, and only led once in the 1<sup>st</sup> half (7-6, with 16:16 to go). They trailed by 7 at halftime (36-29), and let the game get even further away in the first 7 minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half (54-40 with 15:41 to go). A quick 12-1 run got Michigan back in the game, down only 3 points (55-52 with 8:35 to go). Michigan finally got the lead (62-61) with 3:28 left, lost it (63-62), and got it back for good (64-63). PSU was still within one point (70-69) with 5 seconds left, but Michigan made their free throws to win the game.

Michigan led 3-0 and 3-2 vs. Maryland, then never led again. Maryland led by as many as 11 points (37-26) late in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, and led by 9 (37-28) at halftime. In the early part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, UM got as close as 1 point (38-37), but could never quite "get over the hump". It was still a 3-point game (73-70) in the final minute, but UM couldn't get the stops or hit the big shots when they needed them.

[The stats from the PSU game](#) show why Michigan had such a hard time: they shot poorly (44.6% overall, 28.6% from 3-point range), and they got hammered on the boards (38-27). PSU lost the game with turnovers (14-5).

[The stats from the Maryland game](#) are actually a little better. UM shot better (50.0% overall and 38.1% from 3-point range), and got closer in the rebounding battle (33-26). Maryland won because they were on fire from 3-point range: 10-for-15 (66.7%).

### **Who Looked Good**

In both games, 4 of the 5 starters hit double figures.

[DJ Wilson](#) hit double figures in both games (12 and 13). He was 3-for-3 shooting 3-pointers vs. Maryland.

[Moritz Wagner](#) also hit double figures in both games (12 and 17). He also had 5 rebounds in each game. He kind of fell in love with the 3-point shot a little more than he should have in the Maryland game, going 2-for-7.

[Zak Irvin](#) was the 3<sup>rd</sup> starter to hit double figures in both games (14 and 15).

[Derrick Walton Jr.](#) hit double figures (14) vs. PSU, but had a rough game (5 points) vs. Maryland.

[Muhammad-Ali Abdur-Rahkman](#) was the other starter to hit double figures in one game (12 vs. Maryland) and have a rough time the other game (7 vs. PSU).

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

[Duncan Robinson](#) did OK (8 points) vs. PSU, but had a quiet game (3 points) vs. Maryland.

[Mark Donnal](#) had 3 and 5 points.

[Xavier Simpson](#) had 2 and 0 points.

[Sean Lonergan](#) went scoreless in 1 minute of playing time vs. PSU, and didn't play in the Maryland game.

### **Who Else Played**

No one else played.

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

[Brent Hibbitts](#), [Jon Teske](#), [Ibi Watson](#) and [Fred Wright-Jones](#) didn't play.

### **The Big Picture**

Nothing has changed since last week: Michigan still stands a decent chance of getting into the NCAA Tournament, but they need to win more of the "toss up" games, especially at home.

### **What's Next**

This week Michigan plays two more games, one on the road, and one in Crisler Arena. On Wednesday (01/11/2017, 9:00 p.m. EST, BTN), Michigan plays at [Illinois](#), then on Saturday (01/14/2017, 2:00 p.m., BTN), they play [Nebraska](#) in Crisler Arena.

Illinois has the same record as Michigan (11-5 overall, 1-2 in the Big Ten), a few good wins (North Carolina State, Virginia Commonwealth, BYU, Missouri, and Ohio State), and only one bad loss (Winthrop). They also lost to Maryland, by a lot more than Michigan did (84-59). This will be a tough game, especially on the road.

Nebraska has been the biggest surprise so far in the Big Ten. Their overall record is 9-6, but they are 3-0 in the Big Ten, with wins over Indiana (on the road), Maryland (on the road), and Iowa (at home). They didn't beat anyone good in the non-conference schedule, and they have one bad loss (Gardner-Webb). If they can beat Indiana and Maryland on the road, they can certainly beat Michigan in Crisler. This game does not look very promising.

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

Go Blue!