

Nothing But 'Net – Week #07 – 12/10/2018 – Finally, Some Adversity

The (#5) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games last week, and they won both of them. [On Tuesday \(12/04/2018\), they won at Northwestern 62-60](#), then [on Saturday \(12/08/2018\), they beat South Carolina 89-78](#) in Crisler Arena. Michigan's record is now 10-0 (2-0 in the Big Ten).

Time for more Questions & Answers:

Q: Adversity? And that's a good thing?

A: Yeah, some adversity is a good thing, just not too much. Michigan had been largely unchallenged in their first eight games, winning each of them by at least 17 points. There had been a few scary starts (down 10 early to North Carolina, for example), but Michigan was usually firmly in command for the last 10 minutes each game. Not in the Northwestern game: Michigan only led by six points (36-30) at halftime, but they started the 2nd half with a 9-0 run to make it a 15-point lead (45-30) with 17:19 left, and it looked like the game was over. Hah! Northwestern went on their own 15-2 run to get within two points (47-45), tied the game at 54-54, then went ahead 56-54. It was still tied at 60-60 with 2:09 to go, and Michigan scored the final points with 1:53 left, then played good defense to shut Northwestern down and hang on for the win. So, there was plenty of adversity, and Michigan handled it pretty well and got the win. They should learn a lot more from a close game than they do from a 27-point blowout.

Q: Was there any adversity in the USC game?

A: I mean, a little? Michigan didn't blow them away, but they had a comfortable lead for the last 16 minutes of the game. The 1st half was close, but once Michigan got the lead over 10 in the 2nd half, they didn't let it get below 9 the rest of the way. USC was much better than their record and early results would suggest, but Michigan handled them pretty solidly.

Q: How were the team stats?

A: About what you would expect: sad in the Northwestern game, and better in the USC game:

Overall shooting

24-for-55 (43.6%) vs. Northwestern

28-for-54 (51.9%) vs. USC

3-point shooting

5-for-20 (25.0%) vs. Northwestern

10-for-24 (41.7%) vs. USC

Free throw shooting

9-for-13 (69.2%) vs. Northwestern

23-for-30 (76.7%) vs. USC

Michigan out-rebounded Northwestern (33-26) and USC (37-24).

Michigan tied in the turnover battle vs. Northwestern (9-9), but lost the battle to USC (16-10).

Complete stats here: [Northwestern USC](#)

Q: Who looked good for Michigan?

A: Several players had a good week:

- [Ignas Brazdeikis](#) hit double figures in both games (23 points vs. Northwestern and 17 points vs. USC). He was 3-for-6 shooting 3-pointers vs. Northwestern, and he was 11-for-12 from the free throw line vs. USC.
- [Jordan Poole](#) also hit double figures in both games (15 and 26 points). Those 26 points are new career high for Jordan, and he did it in the game that was billed as a "Poole Party".
- [Jon Teske](#) only hit double figures in one game (8 and 15 points), but he was a defensive force in both games.
- [Charles Matthews](#) had a miserable game vs. Northwestern (3 points), but did a little better vs. USC (12 points).
- [Zavier Simpson](#) hit double figures in one game this week (10 and 7 points), but he contributed even more with his assists (5 and 7). He also played great defense.
- [Isaiah Livers](#) also hit double figures in one game this week (0 and 12 points).

Q: Who looked not-so-good for Michigan?

A: A couple players had disappointing weeks:

- [Eli Brooks](#) chipped in a 3-pointer vs. Northwestern, but was held scoreless vs. USC.
- [Austin Davis](#) didn't even attempt a shot in either game.

Q: Who else played?

A: No one else played. [Coach Beilein](#) has shortened up his bench considerably, with only three subs in each game this week.

Q: What did we learn this week?

A: We learned that Michigan can handle adversity. We also learned that Michigan can give up a good-sized lead (15 points) in the middle of the 2nd half, that they can go 9 minutes without scoring, and that they can give up 78 points. All of these are ominous signs, and they're going to catch up with Michigan some time this season. After the UNC and Purdue games, it looked like Michigan had everything figured out; now it's obvious that there are some chinks in Michigan's armor.

Q: What's next for Michigan?

A: For the rest of the month, Michigan only has one game each week, all at home, and all on weekends. This week, Michigan plays [Western Michigan](#) on Saturday (12/15/2018, 2:00 p.m., BTN) in Crisler Arena.

WMU is currently 5-4, with no impressive wins, and losses to Nicholls State and USC Upstate. They have one good player, Seth Dugan, a 7'0" senior who leads the team in scoring. It will be interesting watching Dugan and Teske go at it.

That's it for this week. Come on down to Crisler for the WMU game.

Go Blue!