Nothing But 'Net – Week #18 – 02/25/2019 – It Was Fun While It Lasted

The (#7) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games last week, and they won one and lost the other. On Thursday (02/21/2019), they won at Minnesota 69-60, then on Sunday (02/24/2019), they lost to (#10) Michigan State 77-70 in Crisler. The win and the loss leave Michigan with a record of 24-4 (13-4 in the Big Ten).

Time for more Questions & Answers:

Q: It was fun while it lasted?

A: It was a fun season so far, but losing at home to MSU pretty much spoils it. Sure, Michigan can still beat MSU in two weeks, and maybe even sneak back into a tie for 1st place in the league (if Purdue loses again), but this loss took all the fun out of the season. It also ended Michigan's 22-game home winning streak.

Q: So, what happened?

A: The Minnesota game was a nice, solid, encouraging road win. After an early 6-6 tie, Michigan went ahead for good, and won going away. Michigan shot the ball well, and kept their poise.

The MSU game was close for the entire 1st half, and Michigan actually opened up at decent lead (51-45) with 15:42 to go, then the roof fell in. Over the next almost 10 minutes, Michigan went stone cold and MSU caught fire, resulting in a 17-4 run that made the score 62-55. MSU kept the lead around the 7-9 point range for the rest of the game, made their free throws, and earned the win.

Q: Any problems with the officiating?

A: For the first time this season, Michigan lost without Lewis Garrison officiating. However, DJ Carstensen has officiated 3 of Michigan's 4 losses, including the MSU game. I'm sure DJ Carstensen is a fine official, and it's just a coincidence.

Q: How were the game stats?

A: About what you'd expect: good for the Minnesota win, bad for the MSU loss. Michigan hit their 3-pointers in the win, and didn't in the loss. Complete stats here (Minnesota) and here (MSU).

Q: Who looked good for Michigan?

A: A few players had a good week:

- Jordan Poole had 22 and 15 points.
- Ignas Brazdeikis had 10 and 16 points.
- Jon Teske had 17 and 10 points. He also had 11 rebounds vs. MSU, for a double-double.
- Zavier Simpson 5 and 19 points.

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

A: A few players had an "off" week:

- Charles Matthews had 9 and 4 points. He really disappeared in the MSU game.
- Isaiah Livers had 4 and 6 points. He had two turnovers in less than a minute in the MSU game which completely killed any momentum UM had going.
- Eli Brooks played in both games, and failed to score.

Q: Who else played this week?

A: Coach Beilein played a few bench players this week. They didn't contribute much:

- Colin Castleton played in the Minnesota game, but didn't score.
- David DeJulius played in both games, and scored 2 points vs. Minnesota.
- Brandon Johns, Jr. played in the MSU game, but didn't score.

Q: What did we learn this week?

A: We learned that Michigan isn't as good as we thought/hoped. They're not bad, just not as good as it appeared after the first 17 games. Since then, UM is 7-4.

Q: What's next for Michigan?

A: Michigan plays two games again this week, one at home and one away. On Thursday (02/28/2019, 7:00 p.m. EST, ESPN), they play Nebraska in Crisler, then on Sunday (03/03/2019, 3:45 p.m., CBS), they play at (#24) Maryland.

It's certainly weird that Michigan has played 17 Big Ten games and still hasn't played Nebraska, but that's the way the Big Ten set up the schedule. Nebraska is currently 15-13 (5-12 in Big Ten), with lots of embarrassing losses, and no impressive wins. Pre-season polls picked Nebraska to finish 3rd or 4th in the league, but that isn't going to happen. This is a team that Michigan should beat, especially on Senior Night. They just need to shake off the terrible performance vs. MSU and play their "A" game.

Michigan just played and beat Maryland in Ann Arbor on 02/16/2019. It will be tougher on the road, but Michigan can do it.

That's it for this week. Check back next week to see how Michigan did.

Go Blue!