

Nothing But 'Net – Week #12 – 01/13/2020 – The Endgame

The (#19) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, and they won one and lost the other. [On Thursday \(01/09/2020\), they beat Purdue 84-78](#) in double overtime in Crisler Arena, then [on Sunday \(01/12/2020\), they lost at Minnesota 75-67](#). The win and the loss leave Michigan with a record of 11-5 (2-3 in the Big Ten). Michigan is now 0-4 in true road games this season.

What Happened?

Both games were exciting, especially if you were rooting for the home team. Both games were close, and Michigan could have won or lost either game. The difference was that Michigan played well at the end of the Purdue game, and they fell apart at the end of the Minnesota game.

The lead seesawed back and forth for the entire Purdue game, with neither team getting more than 6 points ahead until Michigan finally went up by 9 points in the 2nd overtime. That was enough of a lead, and Michigan hung on for the 6-point win.

Michigan played a very solid first 15 minutes against Minnesota, and built up an impressive 11-point lead (30-19) with 5:13 left in the 1st half. And then, they threw the game away. Over the next 5:13, they scored exactly 1 point, and let Minnesota go on an 11-1 run to finish the half, with Michigan clinging to a 31-30 lead. The momentum was gone, and Minnesota led for most of the 2nd half. Michigan fought back, and actually led by 1 point again (65-64) with 3:22 to go. That was it, though, as they let Minnesota go on an 11-2 run to finish the game. Those two runs at the end of each half added up to 22-3 in almost 9 minutes. Michigan scored 3 points in 9 minutes. They deserved to lose.

Stats

[The stats for the Purdue game](#) are mediocre at best. Michigan shot decently overall (31-for-66 = 47.0%), they shot 3-pointers very poorly (7-for-29 = 24.1%), and they shot free throws poorly (15-for-24 = 62.5%). They lost the rebounding battle badly (47-35), but won the turnover battle (9-15). The free throw shooting almost cost them the game, as they missed several attempts that would have put the game away, especially the front end of one-and-one opportunities.

[The stats for the Minnesota game](#) are actually better than the Purdue stats. Michigan shot poorly overall (26-for-62 = 41.9%), they shot 3-pointers decently (10-for-28 = 35.7%), and they shot free throws very well, but not many of them (5-for-6 = 83.3%). They lost the rebounding battle (33-30) and the turnover battle (8-5).

I don't often mention opposing players, but there is a disturbing trend going on this season: Michigan has been the unlucky recipient of career games by several opposing players, most of them centers/big men. Michigan has won some of these games (Iowa and Purdue), and lost some (Michigan State and Minnesota). It feels like Michigan is playing good defense, including good interior defense, but no one can seem to stop, or even slow down, these players when they get going. They are:

- Luka Garza, center, Iowa. He had 44 points on 17-for-32 shooting. Michigan won the game, 103-91.
- Cassius Winston, guard, Michigan State. He had 32 points on 11-for-19 shooting. Michigan lost the game, 87-69.
- Trevion Williams, forward, Purdue. He had 36 points on 16-for-28 shooting. Michigan won the game, 84-78 in 2OT.
- Daniel Oturu, center, Minnesota. He had 30 points on 13-for-18 shooting. Michigan lost the game, 75-67.

Who Started?

The starters were [Eli Brooks](#), [Brandon Johns, Jr.](#), [Zavier Simpson](#), [Jon Teske](#), and [Franz Wagner](#) for both games. Johns started in place of [Isaiah Livers](#), who is still out with a groin injury. Michigan needs him back, now.

Who Looked Good?

Simpson was the leading scorer in both games, with 22 points vs. Purdue and 19 points vs. Minnesota. He also had 9 assists in each game.

Wagner was the only other Michigan player to hit double figures in both games, with 15 and 17 points. He's finally starting to get his 3-point stroke back: 3-for-9 vs. Purdue and 4-for-9 vs. Minnesota.

Teske almost hit double figures in both games, with 18 and 9 points. He was slowed down by foul trouble in the Minnesota game.

Johns played hard, scoring 8 and 5 points.

Brooks chipped in some points (4 and 9).

[David DeJulius](#) hit double figures in the Purdue game (11 points), and had 6 points in the Minnesota game.

[Austin Davis](#) didn't score much (4 and 2 points), but he played good defense while giving Teske a rest.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Colin Castleton](#) had a disappointing week: 2 and 0 points.

[Adrien Nuñez](#) played sparingly, and didn't score in either game.

Who Else Played?

No one else played.

Who Didn't Play?

As mentioned above, Livers was injured and didn't play in either game.

The practice squad ([C.J. Baird](#), [Cole Bajema](#), [Jaron Faulds](#), [Rico Ozuna-Harrison](#), and [Luke Wilson](#)) didn't play in either game.

What Does It Mean?

Will Michigan win a true road game this season? Not likely. If they don't, they're looking at a record of (at best) 19-12 (10-10 in the Big Ten), which probably won't get them into the NCAA Tournament. And that's assuming they'll win all their home games, which isn't very likely. In short, they have to win at least half of their remaining road games to get into the Big Dance.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan only plays one game, on the road. On Friday (01/17/2020, 9:00 p.m. EST, FS1), they play at [Iowa](#).

Michigan has already played Iowa once this season, back in December (12/06/2019), when Michigan won 103-91 in Crisler Arena. Since then, Iowa has gone 5-2, and is currently 11-5 (2-3 in the Big Ten), exactly the same record as Michigan. Last time, Luka Garza went off for

44 points, but Michigan still managed to win. Since this is a road game, I'm expecting Michigan to lose, and since Michigan is having trouble containing opposing "big", I'm expecting Garza to score at least 40 points.

Check back next week to see how Michigan did.

Go Blue!