

## Nothing But 'Net – Week #19 – 03/02/2020 – Two Sad Losses

The (#19) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this week, and they lost both of them. [On Thursday \(02/27/2020\), they lost to Wisconsin 81-74](#) in Crisler Arena, then [on Sunday \(03/01/2020\), they lost at \(#23\) Ohio State 77-63](#). The two losses lower Michigan's record to 18-11 (9-9 in the Big Ten). Michigan is now tied for 8<sup>th</sup> place in the Big Ten.

### What Happened?

Three-point shooting is what happened. Michigan couldn't hit theirs, and their opponents couldn't miss theirs. It was that simple. Both opponents were red-hot from outside, and Michigan was terrible. Michigan kept it close in both games, but couldn't deliver in the clutch. The OSU score may look like a blow out, but UM tied the game up (54-54) with 6:51 to go, then fell apart and let OSU finish with a 23-9 run. In the Wisconsin game, Michigan never led, but got within 2 points several times, and were within 3 points (77-74) with 26 seconds left. They had a chance to pull within one point, but they missed the front end of a one-and-one, and that was the game. Wisconsin made their free throws to seal it.

### Stats

[The stats for the Wisconsin game](#) are mixed. Michigan shot pretty well overall (31-for-60 = 51.7%), but they shot 3-pointers terribly (3-for-10 = 30.0%). 30% isn't too bad, but it's terrible when you only take 10 attempts. Michigan shot free throws poorly (9-for-15 = 60.0%), they tied in the rebounding battle (29-29), and they won the turnover battle (5-8). How did they lose? Wisconsin shot 11-for-23 (47.8%) from 3-point range. That's a 24 point difference right there.

[The stats for the OSU game](#) are actually a little better. Michigan shot worse overall (25-for-56 = 44.6%), but they made more 3-pointers, even at a worse percentage shooting rate (7-for-26 = 26.9%). They shot free throws well, but not nearly enough (6-for-8 = 75.0%). They lost the rebounding battle (32-30) and the turnover battle (12-9). How did they lose? OSU shot a blazing 11-for-21 (52.4%) from 3-point range. That's a 12 point difference.

### Who Started?

The starters for the Wisconsin game were [Brandon Johns, Jr.](#), [Isaiah Livers](#), [Zavier Simpson](#), [Jon Teske](#), and [Franz Wagner](#). Johns started in place of [Eli Brooks](#), who was injured with a broken nose. Fortunately, Brooks was back for the OSU game wearing a mask, so he started in that game instead of Johns.

### Who Looked Good?

Simpson had a career game vs. Wisconsin (32 points, 5 rebounds, 6 assists), but it was not enough. He had a good game (12 points, 5 rebounds, 7 assists) vs. OSU. He had quite a week.

Wagner was the only other Michigan player to hit double figures in both games, with 17 points vs. Wisconsin and (team high) 18 points vs. OSU. He shot a good percentage from 3-point range: 1-for-2 in the Wisconsin game and 4-for-8 in the OSU game. He was the leading rebounder in both games, with 7 vs. Wisconsin and 10 vs. OSU, for a double-double.

Livers had a decent game against Wisconsin (9 points), but he had a lousy game vs. OSU (6 points on 2-for-11 shooting).

Teske had a decent week: 7 and 8 points.

Brooks had 7 points in the OSU game. He didn't play in the Wisconsin game.

[Austin Davis](#) had a mediocre game vs. Wisconsin (2 points), but did better against OSU (8 points).

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

Johns had another lousy week: 5 and 0 points.

[David DeJulius](#) played a lot (21 and 14 minutes), but only scored 2 points in each game.

### **Who Else Played?**

[Colin Castleton](#) got 2 points in the OSU game.

[Adrien Nuñez](#) only played in the Wisconsin game, and failed to score.

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

As mentioned above, Brooks didn't play in the Wisconsin game, due to injury.

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?**

This was a terrible week for Michigan. A week ago, they were projected as a 5-seed in the NCAA Tournament; now they've dropped to a 9-seed. There are 2 games left in the regular season, and if they lose them both, they may not make the Big Dance at all.

### **What's Next?**

This week, Michigan plays their last two games of the regular season, one at home and one on the road. On Thursday (03/05/2020, 6:30 p.m., FS1), they play [Nebraska](#) in Crisler Arena, then on Sunday (03/08/2020, 12:00 p.m., FOX), they play at (#9) [Maryland](#).

Michigan has already played, and beaten, Nebraska on the road, 79-68 back on 01/28/2020. Since then, Nebraska has shown that they are one of the weakest Power 5 teams in the country. They are 7-22 (2-16 in the Big Ten), tied for last place with Northwestern, who just beat them this week. This game is Michigan's Senior Night, and they couldn't ask for a better opponent to send Simpson and Teske out with a win.

In stark contrast to Nebraska, there's Maryland. They are currently 23-6 (13-5 in the Big Ten), all alone in 1<sup>st</sup> place. They actually haven't beaten anybody impressive in non-conference play, and they've lost a few head-scratchers in league play: Iowa, Wisconsin, and Ohio State. They have some height (a 7'2" player and a couple 6'10" players), and a bonafide star (Anthony Cowan Jr.). They will probably be playing for the Big Ten regular season title, and this game will be their Senior Day. This will be the toughest road game for Michigan since the game at Louisville back in early December. It's not unwinnable, but Michigan is going to have to play their best game since the Gonzaga game to beat Maryland.

Don't get me started on the weird schedules that the Big Ten comes up with: this will be Big Ten Game #20 (out of 20) for Michigan, and the first and only time they play Maryland this season.

Check back next week to see how Michigan did.

Go Blue!