

Nothing But 'Net – Week #06 – 12/28/2020 – Merry Christmas

The (#19) University of Michigan men's basketball team played one game this week, and they won it. [On Friday \(12/25/2020\), they beat Nebraska 80-69 in Lincoln, NE.](#) Michigan's record is now 7-0 (2-0 in the Big Ten).

What Happened?

Yes, Michigan played a game in Lincoln, NE on Christmas Day. At least they won, and they looked good doing it, so it was a Merry Christmas. The whole 1st half was close, with neither team getting more than 4 points ahead. Nebraska led for most of the half, but Michigan managed to eke out a 2-point lead at halftime, 36-34. Michigan opened the 2nd half with a quick 7-1 run to take an 8 point lead (43-35) with 18:36 left. That was all the lead that Michigan needed. Michigan never trailed in the 2nd half, and pushed the lead as high as 13 points, winning by 11.

Stats

[The stats for the Nebraska game](#) are pretty good. Michigan shot well overall (30-for-59 = 50.8%), they shot 3-pointers decently (9-for-27 = 33.3%), and they shot free throws pretty well (11-for-14 = 78.6%). They won the rebounding battle handily (43-31), but they lost the turnover battle badly (15-8). Michigan won this game with overall shooting.

Who Started?

The starters were [Eli Brooks](#), [Hunter Dickinson](#), [Isaiah Livers](#), [Mike Smith](#), and [Franz Wagner](#).

Who Looked Good?

Wagner had his best game of the season, with 20 points and 9 rebounds. This is NOT his ceiling, but it is a step in the right direction. He still hasn't found his 3-point shot (2-for-7).

Livers had a good game, scoring 17 points. He also had a mediocre day shooting 3-pointers (3-for-8).

Dickinson continued his strong play, with another double-double: 13 points and 15 rebounds. The 15 rebounds are a new career high for him. I understand that 7 games is a short career.

Smith was the 4th starter in double figures, with 10 points. He also had a team-high 6 assists.

[Chaundee Brown, Jr.](#) came off the bench and hit double figures, with 13 points.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

Brooks was the only starter who didn't hit double figures, with 7 points. He did have 4 assists.

[Brandon Johns, Jr.](#) had another quiet game, with 0 points. He subbed in for Dickinson, but he just isn't doing much as a "small ball 5". In 6 minutes, he didn't attempt a shot or grab a rebound.

[Terrance Williams II](#) also had another quiet game, also scoring 0 points. He did attempt some shots (0-for-3), and he did grab 1 rebound.

Who Else Played?

Nobody else played.

Who Didn't Play?

[Austin Davis](#) is still out with his foot injury.

The 3 scholarship players who aren't part of the main rotation ([Jace Howard](#), [Zeb Jackson](#), and [Adrien Nuñez](#)) didn't play this week.

The scout team players ([C.J. Baird](#), [Jaron Faulds](#), [Rico Ozuna-Harrison](#), [Brandon Wade](#), and [Luke Wilson](#)) didn't play this week. Note that Wade is now eligible to play.

What Does It Mean?

The good news is: Michigan is the last undefeated team in the Big Ten, they're 2-0 in league play, and they're half a game out of 1st place in the league standings. They're 7-0 for the 2nd year in a row.

The bad news is: Michigan hasn't played any of the contenders yet. In fact, Michigan has 4 more Big Ten games before they play a currently-ranked opponent (Wisconsin), although Northwestern is likely to be in the Top-25 when Michigan plays them (see below).

So, we don't really know how good this Michigan team is yet. They've looked good in most of their games, but the level of competition will go up very soon.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan plays two games, one on the road and one at home. On Thursday (12/31/2020, 7:00 p.m., ESPN2), they play at [Maryland](#), then on Sunday (01/03/2021, 7:30 p.m., BTN), they play at home vs. [Northwestern](#). Yes, after playing on Christmas Day in beautiful Lincoln, NE, they get to play on New Year's Eve in glamorous College Park, MD.

Maryland is currently 5-3 (0-2 in Big Ten). They haven't beaten anyone noteworthy, and they have lost to Clemson, (#19) Rutgers, and Purdue. They don't have any superstars on their roster, but they do have a 7'2" center. This will be a tough game, especially on the road.

Northwestern is currently 6-1 (3-0 in Big Ten). They have beaten (#4) Michigan State, Indiana, and (#23) Ohio State. Their only loss is to Pittsburgh. Actually, they didn't just beat MSU, they crushed them. They have 3 highly-regarded players on their roster (Boo Buie, Miller Kopp, and Pete Nance), and they have decent height: two 6'10" guys and a 7-footer. This will be Michigan's toughest game so far. Ask MSU, Indiana, and OSU if Northwestern can play this season.

Go Blue!