

Nothing But 'Net – Week #13 – 02/15/2021 – Back In The Saddle Again

The (#3) University of Michigan men's basketball team played one game this week, and they won it. [On Sunday \(02/14/2021\), they beat \(#21\) Wisconsin 67-59](#) in Madison, WI. The win raises Michigan's record to 14-1 (9-1 in the Big Ten). Michigan is still all alone in 1st place in the Big Ten standings.

What Happened?

After over three weeks (23 days) off, Michigan finally got to play another game, and there was a little rust. The first half was not pretty, especially on the offensive end. The opening 11 minutes were close, and the score was tied (20-20) with 9:10 to go in the half. That's when UM went cold, and Wisconsin went on a 19-7 run to end the half, up 39-27 at halftime. Fortunately, Michigan finally remembered how to play the game, and they slowly climbed back into it. They got within 3 points (45-42) with 14:12 left, and within a point (53-52) with 6:27 to go. They finally went ahead (54-53) at the 5:04 mark, and the game was tied up (59-59) with 2:21 to go. That's when Michigan got serious, and went on an 8-0 run to end the game, winning 67-59. They held Wisconsin without a basket in the last 4:44 of the game.

Stats

[The stats for the Wisconsin game](#) are just OK. Michigan shot decently overall (24-for-59 = 40.7%), they shot 3-pointers well enough (7-for-17 = 41.2%), and they shot free throws pretty well (12-for-16 = 75.0%). They won the rebounding battle (36-32) and the turnover battle (6-10). Michigan won this game with defense, holding Wisconsin to 38.9% shooting, 31.6% from deep.

Who Started?

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

Who Looked Good?

Livers was the leading scorer, with 20 points, on 8-for-16 shooting (4-for-7 from 3-point range). He also had 7 rebounds.

Wagner had 14 points, on 6-for-11 shooting (2-for-4 from deep).

Dickinson had another double-double, with 11 points and 15 rebounds. He also had a career-high 5 blocked shots.

Brooks had 9 points, but he shot terribly: 2-for-11 overall (0-for-2 from 3-point range).

Smith only had 6 points, but he had 6 assists, and only 1 turnover.

[Austin Davis](#) spelled Dickinson for 13 minutes, and chipped in 6 points, on 3-for-4 shooting.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Brandon Johns, Jr.](#) played for 4 minutes, but didn't attempt a shot.

[Chaundee Brown, Jr.](#) had 1 point.

Who Else Played?

No one else played.

Who Didn't Play?

The 4 scholarship players who aren't part of the main rotation ([Jace Howard](#), [Zeb Jackson](#), [Adrien Nuñez](#), and [Terrance Williams II](#)) didn't play.

The scout team players ([C.J. Baird](#), [Jaron Faulds](#), [Rico Ozuna-Harrison](#), [Brandon Wade](#), and [Luke Wilson](#)) didn't play.

What Does It Mean?

This was a huge win, since no one knew how Michigan would respond after a long break with two weeks of no practice. As I mentioned, they looked a little rusty, especially on offense in the first half, but they shook it off in the second half, and played very well in "crunch" time. This was Michigan's first road win against a ranked opponent this season.

In terms of the Big Ten title race, this was a very important win for Michigan. It keeps them all alone in 1st place, two games ahead of Illinois and three games ahead of Ohio State in the all-important loss column. At this point, there is still no news about when (or if) the five postponed Michigan games will be rescheduled, so win percentage might be used to determine the Big Ten champion, and Michigan is half a game ahead of Illinois and OSU in win percentage.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan is scheduled to play two games, one at home and one on the road. On Thursday (02/18/2021, 9:00 p.m., FS1), they are scheduled to play (#25) [Rutgers](#) in Crisler, then on Sunday (02/21/2021, 1:00 p.m. EST, CBS), they are scheduled to play at (#4) [Ohio State](#).

Rutgers is currently 12-7 (8-7 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over Syracuse, (#13) Illinois, and Michigan State, and a less-than-impressive loss to Penn State. They have a couple star players (Geo Baker and Ron Harper, Jr.) and some height (three 6'11" players). This will be a challenging game.

OSU is currently 17-4 (11-4 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over Notre Dame, UCLA, (#11) Rutgers, (#15) Rutgers, (#14) Illinois, (#10) Wisconsin, and (#8) Iowa, and less-than-impressive losses to Purdue (twice), Northwestern, and Minnesota. They have a couple star players, but they don't have much height. They have beaten some very good teams, but they have also lost to some mediocre teams. This will be Michigan's toughest game so far.

Check back next week to see what happened, and why.

Go Blue!