

Nothing But 'Net – Week #08 – 12/20/2021 – A Welcome Cupcake

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played one game this past week, and they won it. [On Saturday \(12/18/2021\), they beat Southern Utah 87-50](#) in Crisler Arena. The win raises Michigan's record to 7-4 (1-1 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

Michigan had a light schedule this week, since the players are taking finals. They only played one game, at home, against a lesser opponent. SUU is a pretty good team with lots of experience, but not much height, and UM took advantage of the height differential. The game was expected to be pretty close and competitive, but Michigan made SUU look helpless out there. It was a fun, easy, stress-free game.

Michigan never trailed, but after an early tie (2-2), they only led by 1 point (11-10) at the 14:30 mark. Over the next 4:35, Michigan went on a 14-0 run to push the lead up to 15 points (25-10) with 9:55 left in the half. The lead was still 15 points (31-16) at the 8:11 mark, when UM went on another 14-0 run, to take the lead up to 29 points (45-16) with 2:12 to go. It was still 29 points (49-20) at halftime. At that point, the game was essentially over, and Michigan used the 2nd half as a glorified scrimmage, with lots of playing time for the lesser-used players. UM kept the lead in the 30-34 point range for most of the half, although SUU did creep within "only" 28 points (69-41) at the 6:08 mark. Michigan finished strong, and won by 37 points. It was a solid, impressive performance.

Stats

[The game stats](#) are solid, but not too flashy. Michigan shot well overall (36-for-64 = 56.3%), they shot 3-pointers pretty well (7-for-18 = 38.9%), and they shot free throws well enough (8-for-12 = 66.7%). They won the rebounding battle handily (44-27), and they won the turnover battle barely (11-12). They won this game with overall shooting and good defense, holding SUU to 32.8% overall shooting (19-for-58) and 17.4% shooting from 3-point range (4-for-23).

Who Started?

The starters were [Eli Brooks](#), [Moussa Diabate](#), [Hunter Dickinson](#), [Caleb Houston](#), and [DeVante' Jones](#).

Who Looked Good?

Dickinson was the star of this game, with 22 points and 10 rebounds, for another double-double. He also had 2 blocked shots, and held the two SUU centers to a combined 5 points.

Jones had the best game of his Michigan career, with 13 points on 5-for-6 shooting (3-for-3 from 3-point range). He also dished out 6 assists against 1 turnover, all in only 22 minutes. The young point guards got to play the other 18 minutes.

Houston almost hit double figures, with 9 points. He looked solid and comfortable out there.

Diabate also almost hit double figures, with 8 points, including two highlight-reel dunks. He also had 8 rebounds, and helped Dickinson shut down the SUU centers. On the negative side, he committed 4 fouls, and had 3 turnovers.

[Kobe Bufkin](#) had the best game of his young Michigan career, with 11 points on 4-for-9 shooting. If only he could have hit a couple 3-pointers (0-for-3)...

[Zeb Jackson](#) had his best game of the season, with 8 points on 3-for-4 shooting (2-for-2 from 3-point range). He did a nice job at point guard.

[Frankie Collins](#) didn't score a lot of points (5), but he had a good game running the offense, with 3 assists vs. 0 turnovers. He also had 4 rebounds.

[Terrance Williams II](#) also didn't score many points (3), but he contributed in other ways, with 5 rebounds and 3 assists.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

For the first time this season, Brooks looked "not-so-good". He ended up with only 2 points, on 1-for-4 shooting, and had 2 turnovers against 3 assists. He had hit double figures in every game up until this one.

[Brandon Johns, Jr.](#) had a lousy game, with 2 points on 2-for-3 free throw shooting, and no field goal attempts, in 12 minutes of "action".

Who Else Played?

[Jaron Faulds](#) played for 2 minutes, and scored 2 points.

[Jace Howard](#) played for 7 minutes, but didn't attempt a shot.

[Adrien Nuñez](#) played for 4 minutes, and scored 2 points.

Who Didn't Play?

[Isaiah Barnes](#) and [Will Tschetter](#) are the scholarship players who didn't play.

[Ian Burns](#) and [Brandon Wade](#) are the scout team players who didn't play.

What Does It Mean?

This was a game that Michigan was expected to win, and they took care of business. They opened up a big lead at halftime, so they were able to get some valuable game experience for some of the lesser-used players. That will help when the grind of the Big Ten schedule starts in the new year.

At this point, Michigan is solidly "on the bubble" for the Big Dance. They have plenty of opportunities to win big games in the Big Ten part of the schedule, but they don't have a very big margin for error. They need to get the youngsters ready to go, and hope for the best.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan only plays one game. On Tuesday (12/21/2021, 7:00 p.m., BTN) they play Purdue-Fort Wayne in Crisler Arena.

[Purdue-Fort Wayne](#) is currently 5-5 (1-1 in the Horizon League). They have no impressive wins, and embarrassing losses to Western Michigan, Florida Gulf Coast, Wright State, and Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. They don't have any noteworthy players, and they don't have any height (one 6'9" player). This is a game that Michigan should win easily.

Check back next week to find out what happened and why.

Go Blue!