

Nothing But 'Net – Week #03 – 11/14/2022 – A Work In Progress

The (#22) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they won them both. [On Monday \(11/07/2022\), they beat Purdue-Fort Wayne 75-56](#) in Crisler Arena, then [on Friday \(11/11/2022\), they beat Eastern Michigan 88-83](#) in Little Caesars Arena in Detroit. The two wins raise Michigan's record to 2-0.

What Happened?

Michigan was supposed to win these two games, and they did. However, the way they won the EMU game shows that this team is still a work in progress. They certainly did not look like a Top-25 team for much of that game.

In the PFW game, Michigan had a slow start. PFW led 8-4 at the 15:17 mark, but Michigan finally went ahead for good, 9-8, with 14:36 to go in the 1st half. They pushed their lead as high as 16 points (24-8) with a 20-0 run that ended at the 10:45 mark. They traded baskets, and still led by 16 points (35-19) with 4:28 to go. PFW got a little closer, and trailed by 12 (40-28) at halftime. In the 2nd half, Michigan pushed their lead up to 24 points (59-35) with 12:50 to go, and kept the lead around 20 points for the rest of the game, although they did let PFW get within 12 points a couple times. It was a solid win against an overmatched opponent.

In the EMU game, Michigan trailed for the first 7:15. EMU never got more than 5 points ahead, but they dictated the pace, and outplayed Michigan. UM finally got the lead, 15-14, at the 12:45 mark, and they pushed the lead up to 6 points (20-14) with 11:20 to go in the half. That was the high point for UM for the half, as the lead seesawed back and forth, with EMU leading at halftime, 45-42.

The beginning of the 2nd half saw EMU start to pull away, up by 8 points (51-43) at the 17:40 mark. Michigan fought back, and finally took the lead, 56-55, with 13:37 to go. It didn't last long, and other than a brief lead (61-60) with 11:44 left, EMU led most of the rest of the game. Once again, they didn't lead by much, never more than 4 points, but they kept UM at bay. Michigan finally broke through at the 4:48 mark, when they went up 74-73, but the game was tied 77-77 at the 3:51 mark. That's when UM finally woke up and started playing like they wanted to win. They got the lead with 2:49 to go, and never trailed again. They pushed their lead up to 7 points, and won by 5. It was a high-scoring, exciting game, with lots of runs and lead changes, but a Big Ten team isn't supposed to get in a dogfight with a MAC team. Michigan obviously has some things to work on.

Remember Emoni Bates, who I mentioned in my preview of EMU last week? Well, he was as good as advertised, scoring 30 points on 12-for-19 shooting (3-for-6 from deep). He was a big reason that EMU gave Michigan such a scare. If he can keep that up, he'll be one of the top players in the country this season.

Stats

[The game stats for the PFW game](#) were decent. Michigan shot pretty well overall (30-for-64 = 46.9%), they shot 3-pointers decently (9-for-29 = 31.0%), and they shot free throws fairly well (6-for-9 = 66.7%). They lost the rebounding battle (44-38), but they won the turnover battle (8-14). Michigan won this game with overall shooting and defense.

[The game stats for the EMU game](#) were mediocre. Michigan shot pretty well overall (29-for-60 = 48.3%), they shot 3-pointers poorly (5-for-21 = 23.8%), and they shot free throws like they were blindfolded (25-for-40 = 62.5%). They won the rebounding battle (41-36), and they tied in the turnover battle (11-11). They won this game with overall shooting and getting to the free throw line, even if they didn't shoot free throws very well.

Who Started?

The starters for both games were [Kobe Bufkin](#), [Hunter Dickinson](#), [Jett Howard](#), [Jaelin Llewellyn](#), and [Terrance Williams II](#).

Who Looked Good?

Dickinson was the star in both games, with 22 points vs. PFW and 31 points vs. EMU. He was the main reason Michigan won the EMU game. He also had 12 rebounds vs. PFW, for a nice double-double.

Jett Howard had a pretty good week, with 21 and 9 points. He looked good in the PFW game, but struggled a little in the EMU game. He shot 8-for-15 (5-for-10 from deep) vs. PFW, but only 2-for-8 (2-for-7 from 3-point range) vs. EMU.

Williams had an up-and-down week, with only 2 points vs. PFW, but 18 points vs. EMU. He also had 11 rebounds vs. EMU, for his first career double-double. He was the other reason Michigan won the EMU game.

Llewellyn was the only other Michigan player to hit double figures in at least one game this week, with 12 points vs. EMU. He only had 2 points vs. PFW, and he shot miserably in both games: 1-for-5 (0-for-3 from deep) vs. PFW, and 2-for-7 (0-for-3 from 3-point range) vs. EMU. He did shoot 8-for-12 from the free throw line vs. EMU, and he did run the offense pretty well.

Bufkin didn't hit double figures in either game, but he came close, with 8 and 9 points. He certainly hasn't found his 3-point shot yet: 0-for-4 vs. PFW and 0-for-2 vs. EMU. When those start dropping, he'll be a much bigger contributor out there.

[Joey Baker](#) had a very nice game (9 points) vs. PFW, and a very forgettable game vs. EMU (1 point). He was 3-for-6 (all 3-pointers) vs. PFW.

[Jace Howard](#) chipped in 4 and 2 points off the bench, including a 3-pointer vs. PFW.

[Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) had 1 and 4 points backing up Dickinson.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Dug McDaniel](#) had the most exciting sequence of the PFW game, with a long rebound, a nice behind-the-back dribble to avoid a steal, finishing with a very nice Euro Step scoop basket. Unfortunately, those were his only 2 points of the week, even though he played 14 minutes in each game.

Who Else Played?

[Isaiah Barnes](#) played for 6 minutes in the EMU game, and scored 2 points.

[Ian Burns](#) played for 2 minutes in the PFW game, and failed to score.

[Gregg Glenn III](#) played for 1 minute in the PFW game, and scored 2 points.

[Jackson Selvala](#) played for 1 minute in the PFW game, and failed to score.

[Cooper Smith](#) played for 1 minute in the PFW game, and failed to score.

[Will Tschetter](#) played for 1 minute in the PFW game, and scored 2 points.

Who Didn't Play?

[Youssef Khayat](#) was the only player who didn't play in at least one game. I suspect he's being redshirted.

What Does It Mean?

Michigan looked solid in the PFW game, but they looked a little dazed vs. EMU. They have much tougher opponents ahead, so they need to figure some things out, and quickly.

There are no "must win" games in November (or December), but there are certainly some "must not lose" games. So far, Michigan has won both of their "must not lose" games, but there are more to come.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan plays three games. On Wednesday (11/16/2022, 6:00 p.m., ESPN) they play Pittsburgh in the [Legends Classic](#) in Brooklyn, NY, on Thursday (11/17/2022, 7:00/9:00 p.m., ESPN2) they play the winner/loser of the Arizona State/Virginia Commonwealth (VCU) game in the Legends Classic in Brooklyn, then on Sunday (11/20/2022, 7:30 p.m., BTN) they play Ohio University in Crisler Arena.

[Pittsburgh](#) was 11-21 last season, 6-14 in the ACC. They had impressive wins over Louisville, Syracuse, Florida State, NC State, and North Carolina, but they also lost to The Citadel, UMBC, and Monmouth. They lost in the 1st round of the ACC Tournament, and didn't play in a post-season tournament. This season, they beat Tennessee Martin, but got crushed by West Virginia (81-56). They don't have any noteworthy players, but they do have quite a bit of height: a 7-footer and two 6'11" players, one with a great name – Federiko Federiko. Yes, that's really his name. Anyway, this is a team that Michigan should beat, but they'll need to play with some focus and discipline.

[Arizona State](#) was 14-17 last season, 10-10 in the Pac-12. They had impressive wins over Oregon (twice), Creighton, and (#3) UCLA, but they also lost to UC Riverside, Washington State (51-29, ouch), and San Francisco. They lost in the 1st round of the Pac-12 Tournament, and didn't play in a post-season tournament. This season, they have already lost to Texas Southern. They do have a noteworthy player: Frankie Collins, who played at Michigan last season. So far, he's doing well at ASU: 16.3 points/game, 5.0 assists/game, and 4.7 rebounds/game. They also have quite a bit of height: a 7-footer and three 6'10" players. This is a team that Michigan can beat, but it will be quite a challenge.

[VCU](#) was 22-10 last season, 14-4 in the Atlantic-10. They had impressive wins over Syracuse, Dayton, (#25) Davidson, Richmond (twice), UMass, and St. Bonaventure, but they also lost to Wagner, Chattanooga, and St. Louis. They lost in the 1st round of the A-10 Tournament, and lost in the 2nd round of the NIT. They also have some noteworthy players: Zeb Jackson and Brandon Johns, Jr., both of whom played at Michigan last season. Zeb has played in both VCU games this season, scoring 6 and 9 points. Brandon is starting for VCU, and has scored 13 and 15 points so far this season. They don't have much height: one 6'10" freshman. This is another team that Michigan can beat, but they need to play a good solid game.

[Ohio](#) was 25-10 last season, 14-6 in the MAC. They didn't have any impressive wins or losses. They lost in the 2nd round of the MAC Tournament, and lost in the 2nd round of the College Basketball Invitational (CBI). They don't have any noteworthy players, and they only have one tall player: a 6'11" junior. This should be an easier game than either of the games in the Legends Classic, but Michigan can't take it easy against them.

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

Go Blue!