**Nothing But 'Net – Week #08 – 12/19/2022 – Taking Care Of Business**

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played one game this past week, and they won it.  On Saturday (12/17/2022), they beat Lipscomb 83-75 in Crisler Arena.  The win raises Michigan's record to 7-3 (1-0 in Big Ten).

**What Happened?**

This was a game that Michigan was expected to win, and they won it.  That's the good news.  The not-so-good news is that Michigan didn't look very good winning it.  It turns out that Lipscomb was better than expected, and they played a good game while Michigan was playing a less-than-inspired game.  That made the contest a lot closer than expected, closer than the final score would indicate.  Still, Michigan took care of business in the end.

**Game Flow**

The first 7 minutes were back-and-forth, with Michigan going ahead 18-17 at the 13:21 mark.  They pushed their lead to as high as 13 points (34-21) with 6:32 to go in the half, then they let Lipscomb get as close as 7 points (46-39) with 1:04 left.  Michigan led by 8 points (49-41) at halftime, but they let Lipscomb get within 5 points (49-44) early in the 2nd half.  Michigan pushed the lead up to 12 points (56-44) with 16:38 to go, and it looked like they would cruise to a comfortable victory.  Wrong.  Lipscomb kept chipping away at Michigan's lead, and finally got back on top, 63-62, at the 8:17 mark.  For the next 4 minutes, the teams traded baskets, and the game was close.  With 4:27 left, Lipscomb had a 4-point lead (73-69), and things looked gloomy for Michigan.  That's when Michigan finally woke up and ended the game on a 14-2 run to win by 8.  It was discouraging to see Michigan play so poorly for most of the 2nd half, but encouraging to see them play so well in "crunch time".

**Stats**

The game stats were mediocre.  Michigan shot well overall (31-for-62 = 50.0%), they shot 3-pointers decently (7-for-19 = 36.8%), and they shot free throws poorly (14-for-23 = 60.9%).  They won the rebounding battle (38-36) and the turnover battle (10-12).  They won this game with overall shooting.

**Who Started?**

The starters were Kobe Bufkin, Hunter Dickinson, Jett Howard, Dug McDaniel, and Terrance Williams II.

**Who Looked Good?**

Bufkin was the hero of this game, with a career-high 22 points, on brilliant shooting: 8-for-9 overall, 4-for-5 from deep.  He stepped up and carried the team on his back when they were drifting aimlessly on offense.

Jett Howard also had a good game, scoring 19 points, along with 4 assists.  He shot pretty well: 8-for-16 overall, but only 1-for-6 from 3-point range.

Dickinson wasn't as effective as usual, scoring only 15 points.  He shot well though: 6-for-9 overall, 1-for-1 from deep.  He also grabbed 7 rebounds.

Williams chipped in 11 points, along with 6 rebounds.  The best part: 0 turnovers and 0 fouls.

McDaniel played well in only his 2nd start, scoring 7 points.  He didn't shoot very well (2-for-8 overall, 0-for-1 from deep), but he was the leading rebounder with 8 boards.  He also had 3 assists against only 1 turnover.  Not bad for a true freshman point guard.  He may have only scored 7 points, but they were all in the last 3:32, when Michigan needed them the most.

[Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) did pretty well backing up Dickinson, with 4 points on 2-for-2 shooting, and 4 rebounds.  On the downside, he was 0-for-5 from the free throw line.  Oops.

[Jace Howard](#) scored 3 points, on his only 3-point attempt.  As usual, he played rock-solid defense.

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

[Joey Baker](#) didn't do much, scoring 2 points (on 1-for-4 shooting) in 12 minutes.

**Who Else Played?**

[Isaiah Barnes](#) played 5 minutes, and failed to score.

[Youssef Khayat](#) played 5 minutes, and failed to score.

**Who Didn't Play?**

[Gregg Glenn III](#)  and [Will Tschetter](#) were the scholarship players who didn't play.

[Ian Burns](#), [Jackson Selvala](#), and [Cooper Smith](#) were the practice squad players who didn't play.

**What Does It Mean?**

This was a game that Michigan was expected to win, and they did.  It sure doesn't help their post-season resume much.  They still haven't proven that they can beat a ranked team, which they will need to do several times to get to the Big Dance.  At this point, they still look a lot like an NIT team, not an NCAA Tournament team.

**What's Next?**

This week, Michigan plays just one game.  On Wednesday (12/21/2022, 7:00 p.m., ESPN), they play North Carolina in Charlotte, NC.  Technically, this is a "neutral site" game, but Charlotte is a lot closer to Chapel Hill (137 miles) than Ann Arbor (611 miles).  You can be sure that it will feel like a road game.

[North Carolina](#) is currently 8-4 (1-1 in ACC).  They started the season ranked #1, and they won their first 5 games against lesser opponents.  Then they lost 4 in a row, 3 of them by 8 points or more, and they dropped out of the Top 25.  Their only impressive win was against (#23) Ohio State, and their losses were to Iowa State, (#18) Alabama, (#10) Indiana, and Virginia Tech.  They have several noteworthy players, especially Armando Bacat, but also including RJ Davis, Caleb Love, and Pete Nance (transfer from Northwestern).  Bacat and Nance are both 6'11", and UNC has a couple 6'10" players as well.  Bacat will be quite a challenge for Dickinson.  This is a game that Michigan can win, but only if they play their best game so far this season.  They played well enough to almost beat Virginia and Kentucky, and they'll need to play that well, and a little better, to beat UNC on an almost-home floor.

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

Go Blue!