

Nothing But 'Net – Week #09 – 12/26/2022 – Those Last 100 Seconds Again...

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played one game this past week, and they lost it. [On Wednesday \(12/21/2022\), they lost to North Carolina 80-76](#) in Charlotte, NC. The loss lowers Michigan's record to 7-4 (1-0 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

This was a game that Michigan wasn't expected to win, and they met expectations. However, like the two games earlier this season against stiff competition (Virginia and Kentucky), Michigan was in the game with 100 seconds to go. In this case, they were only down 2 points (73-71) with 1:23 to go, but they played very poorly in the last 83 seconds, falling behind by as many as 7 points (80-73) before hitting a 3-pointer with 3 seconds left to make the score look closer than it was. On the one hand, it's encouraging that Michigan can stay close against the big boys, but "close only counts in horseshoes and hand grenades", and a loss is a loss.

Game Flow

Michigan actually led for much of the 1st half, building an 8-point lead (20-12) with 11:51 to go. UNC got closer, but Michigan still led by 5 points (28-23) with 6:36 left in the half. That's when UNC went on a demoralizing 18-9 run to end the half, up by 7 (41-34). UNC kept the lead in the 5-7 point range for the rest of the game, except for a couple times when Michigan got within 2 points in the last 2 minutes. UNC made the clutch baskets they needed in "crunch time" and Michigan choked, and that was the ballgame.

Stats

[The game stats](#) were decent. Michigan shot poorly overall (26-for-62 = 41.9%), they shot 3-pointers fairly well (9-for-23 = 39.1%), and they shot free throws decently (15-for-21 = 71.4%). They lost the rebounding battle (40-38), but won the turnover battle (10-12). They lost this game with poor 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 the game again, tying his career high from the last game with 22 points again. Once again, he had great shooting: 7-for-10 overall, 2-for-3 from deep. He's on a roll.

Jett Howard also had a good game, scoring 17 points. He shot pretty well: 6-for-12 overall, 3-for-7 from 3-point range.

Williams scored 8 points, but he shot very poorly: 2-for-9 overall, 2-for-6 from deep. He was the leading rebounder, with 11 boards.

McDaniel scored 7 points again, but he still isn't shooting very well: 3-for-10 overall, 0-for-3 from 3-point range. He ran the offense pretty well, with 5 assists against 2 turnovers.

[Joey Baker](#) finally contributed in a big game. He scored 9 points, on good shooting: 3-for-5 overall, 2-for-3 from deep.

[Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) did pretty well backing up Dickinson, getting his standard 4 points. He also had 7 rebounds.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

Dickinson had a lousy game. It's rare for him to show up in the "not-so-good" list, but this was one of his worst games. He almost hit double figures (9 points), and he had 8 rebounds, but he shot poorly (3-for-9 overall), he had 3 turnovers, he fouled out, he had a technical, and he let the guy he was guarding (Armando Bacot) run wild: 26 points on 11-for-15 shooting.

Who Else Played?

[Jace Howard](#) played 5 minutes, and failed to score.

[Will Tschetter](#) played 4 minutes, and failed to score.

Who Didn't Play?

[Isaiah Barnes](#), [Gregg Glenn III](#) and [Youssef Khayat](#) 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 lose, and they did. Once again, they were in it the whole way, and they could have pulled off the upset on a (supposedly) neutral court, but they didn't get it done. If they could have won this one, it would have helped their post-season resume. They still haven't proven that they can beat a good 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 two games. On Thursday (12/29/2022, 7:00 p.m., B1G+), they play Central Michigan, then on Sunday (01/01/2023, 4:30 p.m., FS1), they play Maryland. Both games are in Crisler Arena.

[Central Michigan](#) is currently 4-8, with no impressive wins, and unimpressive losses to High Point, California Baptist, Robert Morris, Missouri State, and Youngstown State. They don't have any noteworthy players, but they do have some height: two 6'10" guys and two 6'11" guys. This is a game that Michigan should win handily, but it's also the type of game that Michigan has struggled with. They've won all the games that they should have won, but most of those games have been closer and more competitive than expected. Don't be surprised if CMU is in the game at the end.

[Maryland](#) is currently 9-3 (1-1 in Big Ten), with an impressive win over (#16) Illinois, and an unimpressive loss to Wisconsin. Maryland started the season 8-0, and was ranked as high as #13, before they lost 3 in a row. They have one notable player (Donta Scott), and they have some height (a 6'10" guy and a 6'11" guy). Before the season, this looked like a relatively positive game for Michigan, but Maryland has exceeded expectations and Michigan has not looked as good as expected. Michigan can win this game, but they need to play as well as they have against their ranked opponents AND win the last 100 seconds.

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

Go Blue!