

Nothing But 'Net – Week #10 – 01/02/2023 – Mixed Up Week

Happy New Year! That's a wish for the future, not a reflection on a certain football game.

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they lost one and won the other. [On Thursday \(12/29/2022\), they lost to Central Michigan 63-61](#), then [on Sunday \(01/01/2023\), they beat Maryland 81-46](#). Both games were in Crisler Arena. The loss and the win leave Michigan with a record of 8-5 (2-0 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

Talk about a mixed up week! Michigan was expected to handle CMU easily, and have a real uphill battle to stay with Maryland, and exactly the opposite happened. Michigan played terribly against a mediocre CMU squad, and lost in the last 11 seconds, then they played their best game in several seasons against a powerful Maryland team, and beat them soundly. The CMU loss ranks as one of the top (bottom?) two or three most embarrassing losses since I've been following Michigan basketball (since 1974), and the Maryland win is one of the most impressive I've seen in the last 20 years. That's all mixed up!

Game Flow

The CMU game started out innocently enough, with UM opening up a quick 7-point lead, 7-0, at the 17:14 mark. They kept the lead in the 4-6 point range for most of the half, pushing it up to 8 points (23-15) with 5:49 to go. Unfortunately, they went cold at that point, and let CMU go ahead, 27-25, with 28 seconds left. Michigan hit a 3-pointer with 6 seconds left, and led by 1 point at halftime, 28-27. Michigan stayed ahead for the first 4 minutes of the 2nd half, by 3-5 points, but CMU pulled ahead again, 36-35, with 16:14 to go. The lead went back and forth for the next few minutes, and UM led 44-42 with 12:12 left. CMU went up for a while, but UM tied it up (49-49) with 8:18 to go. CMU kept going ahead by 1-3 points, and UM kept tying it up. It was tied 60-60 with 3:14 left, and Michigan actually led 61-60 with 2:27 to go, but CMU hit an off-balance 3-pointer with 11 seconds left, and UM missed 2 shots in the last 4 seconds to lose the game. It was stunning.

There was a very odd sequence in the 1st half of the game. From the 5:55 mark to the 3:54 mark (2 minutes and 1 second), there were 5 offensive foul calls in a row, with 3 against CMU and 2 against Michigan. It's rare to see 5 offensive foul calls in a complete game, but unheard of to see 5 offensive foul calls in a row in 2:01. The refs didn't cost Michigan this game, they blew it on their own, but the officiating was, let's say, "unusual".

After the stunning loss to CMU, I don't think many fans expected UM to stand much chance against Maryland. As I pointed out in my scouting report last week, Maryland started the season 8-0, and they were ranked as high as #13 at one point. They had dropped out of the Top-25 (at #26), but they were still having a much better season than Michigan. It looked like a blowout, and it was, but not the way we were expecting. Michigan looked like a completely different team, charging out of the gate and running Maryland off the court in the first 6 minutes of the half. Michigan scored the first 17 points, on 7-for-7 shooting, and led 19-1 at the 13:57 mark. In those first 6 minutes, Maryland missed their first 10 shots, including four 3-point attempts, and they had 3 turnovers to boot. After hitting a 3-pointer at the 12:09 mark to make it 19-4, they missed 8 more shots in a row over the next 5+ minutes, and were down 27-4 with 6:50 to go in the half. They made a couple baskets and a couple free throws to pull within 22 points (35-13) with 2:29 to go, but Michigan finished the half with a 9-0 run to lead by 31 points at halftime, 44-13.

The second half was more of the same. Michigan kept the lead above 30 points for most of the rest of the game, only letting Maryland get within 28 once and 29 once, before pushing the lead up to 38 points (63-25) with 10:38 to go. Michigan kept the lead in the 35-37 point range the rest of the way, winning by 35, even with the practice team on the floor for the last 3 minutes. It was a thorough butt-whipping, and easily the best game that Michigan has played this season.

Stats

[The game stats for the CMU game](#) were miserable. Michigan shot poorly overall (20-for-57 = 35.1%), they shot 3-pointers terribly (6-for-22 = 27.3%), and they shot free throws decently (15-for-21 = 71.4%). They lost the rebounding battle horribly (44-32), but won the turnover battle (9-14). They lost this game with poor shooting and lousy rebounding. They let CMU grab 17 offensive rebounds for 23 second chance points.

[The game stats for the Maryland game](#) were mixed. Michigan shot well overall (28-for-56 = 50.0%), they shot 3-pointers terribly (3-for-11 = 27.3%), and they shot free throws well, and often (22-for-29 = 75.9%). They crushed Maryland in rebounding (49-30), and tied in the turnover battle (13-13). They won this game with free throw shooting and rebounding, and great defense. They held Maryland to 26.5% overall shooting (18-for-68).

Who Started?

The starters were [Kobe Bufkin](#), [Hunter Dickinson](#), [Jett Howard](#), [Dug McDaniel](#), and [Terrance Williams II](#).

Note that three of the starters are from "the DMV" (District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia). These three players accounted for 51 of Michigan's 81 points vs. Maryland. Dickinson in particular took the game vs. Maryland personally, and played with passion.

Who Looked Good?

Dickinson was definitely the star of the Maryland game, with 32 points and 12 rebounds for a solid double-double, but he had a disappointing game against CMU, with only 13 points and 6 rebounds. He shot very well vs. Maryland (13-for-16), but only 3-for-9 vs. CMU. He played with fire in his eyes against Maryland, but looked disinterested in the CMU game. If he could have played with the same intensity vs. CMU, Michigan might have avoided the upset loss.

Despite the team scoring 81 points, Williams was the only other Michigan player in double figures vs. Maryland, with 11. He only had 2 points vs. CMU.

Bufkin was the leading scorer vs. CMU, with 16 points, but he only scored 5 points vs. Maryland.

McDaniel almost hit double figures in both games, with 10 vs. CMU and 8 vs. Maryland. He did a decent job running the offense in both games, but he had as many turnovers (3 and 3) as assists (4 and 2) on the week. He needs to work on cutting down his turnovers.

Jett Howard hit double figures in the CMU game (12 points), but had a miserable game vs. Maryland (6 points). He shot poorly in both games: 4-for-14 overall (3-for-11 from deep) vs. CMU, and 1-for-7 overall (0-for-4 from deep) vs. Maryland.

[Joey Baker](#) chipped in some points off the bench: 3 and 7.

[Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) did pretty well backing up Dickinson, scoring 2 and 4 points.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

No one looked "not-so-good" this week, although several players had weak games in one of the two games.

Who Else Played?

[Isaiah Barnes](#) played in both games, and scored 0 and 3 points.

[Ian Burns](#) played in the Maryland game, but failed to score.

[Gregg Glenn III](#) played in the Maryland game, and scored 2 points.

[Jace Howard](#) played in both games, and scored 2 and 0 points.

[Youssef Khayat](#) played in the Maryland game, but failed to score.

[Jackson Selvala](#) played in the Maryland game, but failed to score.

[Cooper Smith](#) played in the Maryland game, but failed to score.

[Will Tschetter](#) played in both games, and scored 1 and 3 points.

Who Didn't Play?

Everyone played in at least one game this week (Maryland).

What Does It Mean?

After the CMU game, it looked like Michigan would be lucky to win another game this season. Every Big Ten team is better than CMU. Then they came out blazing vs. Maryland and won by 35 points. Go figure! So, now they have a convincing win over a good team, which is nice, but they have a lot of work to do before they can think about the Big Dance. They still look a lot like an NIT team, not an NCAA Tournament team.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan plays two games. On Wednesday (01/04/2023, 7:00 p.m., BTN), they play Penn State in Crisler Arena, then on Saturday (01/07/2023, 2:30 p.m., Fox), they play at Michigan State.

[Penn State](#) is currently 11-3 (2-1 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#17) Illinois and Iowa, and unimpressive losses to Virginia Tech and Clemson. They have a noteworthy player (Myles Dread) and some height (a couple 6'10" players). This is exactly the kind of team that Michigan has to beat to finish in the top half of the Big Ten this season. PSU is playing better than predicted, and this looks to be a very challenging game.

[Michigan State](#) is currently 9-4 (1-1 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#4) Kentucky, Villanova, and Oregon, and unimpressive losses to Notre Dame (by 18 points) and Northwestern. After the Kentucky and Villanova wins, they were ranked for a couple of weeks, as high as #12, but they are currently in the "also receiving votes" list. They have a few noteworthy players (Joey Hauser, A.J. Hoggard, and Malik Hall), but not much height (one 6'11" guy). It's tough to win on the road, especially in the Big Ten, and especially in an intense rivalry game like this. MSU will be very pumped up to beat Michigan, and Michigan will have to play like they did against Maryland to beat the Spartans.

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

Go Blue!