

Nothing But 'Net – Week #12 – 01/16/2023 – Holding Even, And Mid-Term Grades

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they lost one and won the other. [On Thursday \(01/12/2023\), they lost at Iowa 93-84 \(overtime\)](#), then [on Sunday \(01/15/2023\), they beat Northwestern 85-78](#) in Crisler Arena. The loss and the win leave Michigan with a record of 10-7 (4-2 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

The last couple weeks Michigan has been holding even, winning two games at home and losing two games on the road. It's a shame that they lost the Iowa game, since they had a decent lead with not much time left in regulation, but they played pretty poorly down the stretch, and were flat in overtime. It would have been great to steal a win on the road in the Big Ten, but Michigan just couldn't seal the deal. They looked like they were fixing to give away the home Northwestern game, but they woke up and played solid ball in the closing minutes, avoiding the upset. Still, Michigan needs to do better than just holding even. They need to string together a few wins, and beat a ranked team or two.

Game Flow

The Iowa game was close and competitive the whole way, although Michigan led for most of the game. In the first half, Michigan was either tied or ahead except for:

- 26 seconds from the 13:50 mark to the 13:24 mark, when Iowa led by 1 point (14-13)
- 29 seconds from the 13:07 mark to the 12:38 mark, when Iowa led by 1 point (16-15)
- 30 seconds from the 2:37 mark to the 2:07 mark, when Iowa led by 1 point (40-39)

Other than that, Michigan led by 3-5 points most of the time, including a 3-point lead at halftime, 43-40. The second half was more of the same, with Michigan either tied or leading the whole way, except for:

- 20 seconds from the 14:44 mark to the 14:24 mark, when Iowa led by 1 point (53-52)

Michigan pushed the lead as high as 10 points (65-55) with 10:56 to go, and still led by 7 points (77-70) with 2:18 left. UM was up 4 points (79-75) with 29 seconds left, but they allowed a 4-point play by Iowa with 20 seconds left, and couldn't score in the final seconds, sending the game to overtime. They immediately fell behind in overtime, and never stood a chance.

I don't often second guess [Coach Howard](#), but with 20 seconds left in regulation and a 4-point lead, I would have intentionally fouled someone who wasn't shooting, giving Iowa a maximum of 2 points. Letting them get off a 3-pointer was bad enough, but fouling the shooter is inexcusable. Of course, looking at the replay, it was a very questionable foul call, but still. An intentional foul was the smart play. Sigh.

Michigan led for most of the 1st half against Northwestern, by as many as 12 points (20-8 with 10:11 to go), but they went cold, and NU snuck back into the game. It was all tied up (29-29) with 3:49 left, when NU went ahead. Northwestern led by as many as 6 points (39-33 at the 1:15 mark), and by 2 points at halftime, 39-37. The lead seesawed back and forth in the first 10 minutes of the 2nd half, and NU was up by 1 point (59-58) with 10:17 to go. That's when Michigan finally got organized, and went up by 9 points, 68-59, at the 6:56 mark. They kept the lead in the 5-7 range for the rest of the game, winning by 7 points. It was a nice, solid win against a dangerous Northwestern team.

Stats

[The game stats for the Iowa game](#) were surprisingly good. Michigan shot well overall (33-for-67 = 49.3%), they shot 3-pointers very well (14-for-31 = 45.2%), and they shot free throws acceptably, just not very often (4-for-6 = 66.7%). They lost the rebounding battle (40-37)

and the turnover battle (13-6). They lost this game with silly turnovers and fouls. Iowa was 17-for-22 from the free throw line.

[The game stats for the Northwestern game](#) were also good. Michigan shot very well overall (29-for-56 = 51.8%), they shot 3-pointers very well (10-for-22 = 45.5%), and they shot free throws pretty well (17-for-24 = 70.8%). They won the rebounding battle handily (41-29), but lost the turnover battle badly (18-8). They won this game with hot shooting and solid rebounding. They almost lost it with all those turnovers and poor hustle. NU seemed to get all the 50-50 balls.

Who Started?

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

Who Looked Good?

What a week for Jett Howard! He was on fire in the Iowa game, with 34 points (a career high) on decent shooting (12-for-22 overall, 7-for-13 from deep). It's a real shame that such a brilliant performance was wasted in a loss. He also had 16 points vs. Northwestern.

Dickinson wasn't much of a force offensively in either game, although he did hit double figures in both games: 12 and 10 points. His bigger contribution this week was rebounding: 13 and 15, for a pair of double-doubles.

The most pleasant surprise this week was the emergence of McDaniel on the offensive end. He has done a nice job running the point, but there were many games when he seemed scared or reluctant to shoot when he was open. Not this week: he scored 12 points at Iowa (a career high), then topped it vs. Northwestern with 17 points. He also had 7 and 5 assists, against only 1 and 3 turnovers.

Bufkin only hit double figures in one game, but he was the leading scorer, with 20 points vs. Northwestern. He had 9 points at Iowa. He was very efficient vs. Northwestern: 9-for-11 overall, 2-for-3 from 3-point range.

[Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) has become a key defensive player. He has drawn the toughest assignments, and done a nice job. Coach Howard has played both Reed and Dickinson at the same time for several stretches lately, and it's worked out pretty well. Reed doesn't always score many points (2 and 6 this week), but he plays solid defense and grabs some rebounds. He's getting better every game.

[Joey Baker](#) chipped in 3 and 7 points this week, including a couple timely 3-pointers.

[Will Tschetter](#) is getting to play more, and he's delivering. He plays good, solid defense, and he even chips in some points: 7 and 4. The only downside? He gets out of control occasionally with cheap fouls.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

Williams plays decent defense, and gets the occasional rebound, but he is next to worthless offensively. He only had 5 points in each game. Michigan needs more scoring from him.

Who Else Played?

[Jace Howard](#) played in the Northwestern game, but failed to score.

Who Didn't Play?

[Isaiah Barnes](#), [Gregg Glenn III](#), and [Youssef Khayat](#) were the scholarship players who didn't get to play this week.

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

What Does It Mean?

Once again, Michigan just held even this week. They were expected to lose at Iowa and beat Northwestern, and that's what they did. They are still looking for a win against a good, ranked team.

They still look a lot like an NIT team, not an NCAA Tournament team.

Mid-Term Grades

With 17 games down, and at least 15 left to go, it's time for mid-term grades.

Freshman Eligibility

- [Gregg Glenn III](#) (C) – Gregg hasn't played much (4 games, 11 minutes), and he hasn't scored much (6 points). He hasn't looked very comfortable out there in his limited action.
- [Jett Howard](#) (A-) – Jett has started every game, and he's looked good-to-great out there. He is 2nd on the team in scoring average (15.5 points/game), and is 1st on the team by a lot in made 3-pointers (47). He's shooting a nice percentage overall (45.1%) and from deep (40.2%). He's fast, he's strong, and he's supremely confident.
- [Youssef Khayat](#) (C+) – Youssef has played in 6 games, for a total of 31 minutes, and he's scored 9 points. He is 3-for-5 shooting 3-pointers. He plays hard and fast, but not always under control.
- [Dug McDaniel](#) (B+) – Dug went from a luxury to a necessity overnight when the main point guard (Jaelin Llewellyn) went down with a season-ending knee injury in Game #8 (see below). He hadn't done much up until that point, but since he's been starting, he's gotten better every game. He's 4th on the team in scoring average (7.1 points/game), and 1st on the team in assists (58). Unfortunately, he's 2nd on the team in turnovers (30). He's the fastest player on the team, and he's fearless out there.
- [Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) (B) – Tarris has become a defensive specialist who occasionally chips in some points. He has played in all 17 games, has scored 57 points, and has grabbed 59 rebounds. He's another player who is improving every game.
- [Jackson Selvala](#) (Inc.) – Jackson was a team manager who walked on as a player. He is part of the practice squad. He has played in 3 games for a total of 6 minutes, and he hasn't scored yet.
- [Will Tschetter](#) (B-) – Will was voluntarily redshirted last season, so he has freshman eligibility. He's played in 12 games, and scored 32 points. He plays solid defense when he's in.

Sophomore Eligibility

- [Isaiah Barnes](#) (B-) – Isaiah has played in 11 games, and scored 14 points. He's looked pretty good when he's out there, but he seems to be pretty far down the bench right now.
- [Kobe Bufkin](#) (A-) – Kobe has started every game, and is 3rd on the team in scoring (12.6 points/game). He acts as point guard when McDaniel isn't out there, and he's done a good job.

- [Ian Burns](#) (Inc.) – Ian is on the practice squad, and has only played 3 games for 8 minutes, and hasn't scored yet.
- [Cooper Smith](#) (Inc.) – Cooper is on the practice squad, and has only played 2 games for 4 minutes, and hasn't scored yet.

Junior Eligibility

- [Hunter Dickinson](#) (A-) – Hunter is an enigma. When he gets fired up, he's the best player on the court, but he seems to just drift through the game much of the time. Maybe it's just his "game face", but he often looks and acts disinterested or bored out there. Still, he leads the team in scoring (17.8 points/game), shooting percentage (57.2%), rebounding (151), and blocked shots (29). If only we could get him to play "fired up" more often...
- [Jace Howard](#) (C) – Jace has found a role as a defensive specialist. He's played in 15 games, but only scored 20 points. He occasionally tosses in 3-pointer; he's 4-for-7 from deep this season.
- [Terrance Williams II](#) (C-) – Terrance is the weak link on the team this season. He's started every game, and he's a good defender and rebounder, but he's not helping much on the offensive end: 7.0 points/game.

Senior Eligibility

- [Joey Baker](#) (B-) – Joey has played in all 17 games, but he's only averaging 4.6 points/game. His role is "3 and D", and he's done pretty well shooting 3's: 2nd on the team in made 3-pointers (19), shooting 38.3% from deep.
- [Jaelin Llewellyn](#) (B-) – Jaelin did pretty well in the 8 games that he played before he suffered a season-ending knee injury. He averaged 7.0 points/game, and had 22 assists against only 9 turnovers. It's a shame about his injury.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan plays two games. On Thursday (01/19/2023, 7:00 p.m., ESPN), they play at Maryland, then on Sunday (01/22/2023, 1:00 p.m., BTN), they play Minnesota in Crisler Arena.

[Maryland](#) is currently 11-6 (2-4 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#16) Illinois and (#24) Ohio State, and unimpressive losses to Wisconsin and Rutgers. Michigan has already played Maryland this season, beating them soundly in Crisler Arena on New Year's Day, 81-46. None of the Maryland players looked very good in that game, but Donta Scott is their best player. You can expect Maryland to be pretty fired up for this game, since Michigan embarrassed them last time. It's always tough to win on the road, and I expect this to be a tough game.

[Minnesota](#) is currently 7-8 (1-4 in Big Ten), with an impressive win over Ohio State, and unimpressive losses to DePaul, UNLV, Virginia Tech, Mississippi State, and Nebraska. This is another team that Michigan has already played this season. Michigan's lone Big Ten game in early December (12/12/2022) was at Minnesota, and Michigan beat them easily, 90-75. The final score was deceptive, since Michigan could have won by 25-30 points if they had wanted to. If Michigan can trounce them on the road, they should be able to handle them at home.

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

Go Blue!