

Nothing But 'Net – Week #13 – 01/23/2023 – Another Week, Another Split

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they lost one and won the other. [On Thursday \(01/19/2023\), they lost at Maryland 64-58](#), then [on Sunday \(01/22/2023\), they beat Minnesota 60-56](#) in Crisler Arena. The loss and the win leave Michigan with a record of 11-8 (5-3 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

Another week, another split. Once again, Michigan lost on the road and won at home. In this case, they played two teams that they had already played (and beaten) earlier this season. I was hoping that they could steal a win on the road against Maryland, since they had beaten them by 35 points in Ann Arbor, but it wasn't to be. I was also hoping that Michigan would have an easy time against Minnesota, since they beat them by 15 points on the road, but it also wasn't to be. The loss and the win leave Michigan right where they were last week (and the week before that, and the week before that): on the wrong side of the bubble for the Big Dance. They need to win both games in a week, and win on the road, and beat a ranked team. They've had a tough time with all of those things.

Game Flow

In both games, Michigan got off to a very slow start, and they played most of both games behind, often by 10 points or so. This was especially true in the Maryland game, where they had a miserable start, falling behind by 11 points (17-6) at the 10:29 mark. Maryland pushed the lead up to 13 points (28-15) with 6:32 to go, before Michigan finally woke up and ended the half on a 17-6 run to only trail by 2 points at halftime, 34-32. After fighting so hard to get back in the game, Michigan started the 2nd half with another slow start, quickly falling behind by 6 points (40-34) at the 15:51 mark. Michigan fought back again, and actually tied the game (42-42) with 12:26 left, but they never led. The game was still tied (44-44) at the 11:09 mark, when Maryland went ahead for good. They pushed the lead up to 10 points (59-49) with 4:30 to go, and never let Michigan get closer than 4 points the rest of the way. It was a dreary, disheartening loss to a team that Michigan should have beaten, even on the road.

The start of the Minnesota game was almost as bad. Michigan was quickly down 8-0 in the first 2:00, and down 10 points (20-10) with 10:16 to go. They clawed their way back with an 8-0 run, and were only down 2 points (20-18) at the 5:18 mark. With a chance to tie or even take the lead, Michigan did the following on their next 5 possessions:

- Missed 3-pointer, no rebound
- Missed jumper, offensive rebound, missed jumper, foul
- Missed jumper, no rebound
- Turnover
- Turnover

Fortunately, Minnesota wasn't scoring either, and Michigan managed to tie the score up (23-23) at halftime. After Minnesota went up by 3 early in the 2nd half, Michigan finally got their first lead, 27-26, at the 18:13 mark. They pushed the lead up to 5 points (31-26) with 16:19 to go, but Minnesota tied it up again (31-31) at the 14:55 mark. It was still tied up (33-33) with 13:42 to go, when Michigan went ahead for good. They pushed the lead as high as 8 points, and kept it in the 4-6 point range the rest of the game. It was a decent 2nd half, following a miserable 1st half.

Stats

[The game stats for the Maryland game](#) were sad. Michigan shot pretty poorly overall (23-for-55 = 41.8%), they shot 3-pointers poorly (8-for-28 = 28.6%), and they shot free throws terribly, and not very often (4-for-8 = 50.0%). They won the rebounding battle (36-35), but

lost the turnover battle badly (12-6). They lost this game with turnovers and fouls; Maryland was 13-for-17 from the free-throw line.

[The game stats for the Minnesota game](#) were miserable. Michigan shot poorly overall (22-for-60 = 35.7%), they shot 3-pointers incredibly poorly (2-for-14 = 14.3%), but they did shoot free throws pretty well (14-for-18 = 77.8%). They won the rebounding battle (37-36) and the turnover battle (10-15). They won this game with free throw shooting and taking better care of the ball. They were lucky that Minnesota isn't very good. 14% shooting from 3-point range will lose most games.

Who Started?

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

Who Looked Good?

Dickinson usually saves his best games for Maryland, and he was Michigan's high scorer, but he wasn't nearly as dominant as he usually is against Maryland. He scored 19 points, and had 10 rebounds, for a double-double, but it wasn't quite enough. He did shoot 3-for-5 from 3-point range vs. Maryland. He had a better game against Minnesota, with 23 points and 9 rebounds. He shot 9-for-9 from the free throw line vs. Minnesota!

Jett Howard had an up-and-down week. He was the only other Michigan player in double figures vs. Maryland, with 13 points, but he was scoreless in 15 minutes of action against Minnesota before he injured his ankle and missed the entire 2nd half. At this point, it isn't clear how serious this injury is. Even though he had 13 points vs. Maryland, it wasn't one of his better games, with 4-for-14 shooting, 3-for-12 from 3-point range. He also had 4 fouls and 4 turnovers.

Bufkin also had an up-and-down week. He only had 2 points vs. Maryland, on lousy (1-for-6) shooting, but he had 12 points vs. Minnesota. He had a terrible week shooting 3-pointers: 0-for-2 vs. Maryland and 0-for-4 vs. Minnesota.

McDaniel was yet another player with an up-and-down week. He had a rough time vs. Maryland (4 points, on 2-for-10 shooting, 0-for-4 from deep), but bounced back nicely vs. Minnesota (10 points, on 4-for-10 shooting, 2-for-3 from deep). His assist-to-turnover ratio was pretty good: 7 assists/3 turnovers vs. Maryland, and 3 assists/0 turnovers vs. Minnesota.

Williams had a better week than usual. He almost hit double figures vs. Maryland (9 points), and he had his normal 5 points vs. Minnesota. He was Michigan's leading rebounder vs. Maryland, with 13.

[Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) did a nice job backing up Dickinson. He scored 4 points in each game, and played solid, rugged defense.

[Will Tschetter](#) chipped in 2 and 4 points, and played solid defense.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Joey Baker](#) had a decent game vs. Maryland (5 points), but he was horrible vs. Minnesota. He scored 2 points on 1-for-6 shooting, and he missed a breakaway layup, with Michigan clinging to a narrow lead in a tight game. It was embarrassing.

Who Else Played?

[Isaiah Barnes](#) played in both games, but didn't attempt a shot.

Who Didn't Play?

[Gregg Glenn III](#), [Jace Howard](#), and [Youssef Khayat](#) were the scholarship players who didn't get to play this week. Jace missed both games with a concussion.

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

What Does It Mean?

Time is running out for Michigan. They can't afford to keep playing 0.500 ball. They need to string a couple wins together, including a couple on the road and a couple against ranked teams. There's still time, but it's getting late.

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 (01/26/2023, 9:00 p.m., FS1), they play (#3) Purdue in Crisler Arena, then on Sunday (01/29/2023, 12:00 p.m., BTN), they play at Penn State.

[Purdue](#) is currently 19-1 (8-1 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#6) Gonzaga, (#8) Duke, (#24) Ohio State, and Michigan State, and one bizarre loss to Rutgers. They have a couple noteworthy players (Fletcher Loyer and Zach Edey) and a lot of height: a 6'10" guy, a 7'2" guy, and Edey, who is 7'4". Edey is the biggest problem (literally), since he's 3 inches taller than Dickinson, but Loyer (younger brother of Foster Loyer, who was at Michigan State for a couple seasons) is a great outside shooter. It's a lethal combination, and Michigan will have to play their "A+" game to stand a chance of pulling off the upset in this one.

[Penn State](#) is currently 13-6 (4-4 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#17) Illinois, Iowa, and Indiana, and unimpressive losses to Virginia Tech, Clemson, and Wisconsin. Michigan played PSU pretty recently (01/04/2023), and beat them by 10 points (79-69) in Crisler Arena. That was a close game, and it'll be even tougher on the road.

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

Go Blue!