

## **Nothing But 'Net – Week #21 – 03/20/2023 – A Sad End To A Sad Season**

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week in the [National Invitation Tournament](#) (NIT), and they won one and lost the other. [On Tuesday \(03/14/2023\), they beat Toledo 90-80](#) in Crisler Arena, then [on Saturday \(03/18/2023\), they lost at Vanderbilt 66-65](#). The win and the loss leave Michigan with a final record of 18-16 (11-9 in Big Ten). Their season is over.

### **What Happened?**

Michigan looked good in beating Toledo in Crisler, and they were in control of the Vanderbilt game, with a comfortable lead in the final 67 seconds. Those last 67 seconds were a nightmare, and Michigan lost the game, ending their season. It was a sad way to end a sad season.

### **Game Flow**

The Toledo game started out very poorly, with Toledo running to a quick 9-2 lead at the 18:27 mark. Michigan finally got going, and pulled to within a point (11-10) with 16:28 to go in the half. UM finally tied it up (18-18) at the 13:41 mark, then fell behind again, 27-18, with 11:11 to go. Michigan fought back again, and tied it up again (29-29) with 7:13 left in the half. They fell behind again, but finally got their first lead of the game (35-33) at the 4:13 mark. The lead went back and forth for the rest of the half, with Toledo hitting a 3-pointer with 3 seconds left to lead by 2 at halftime, 42-40. The first 2:14 of the second half were amazing. Michigan hit three 3-pointers and a jumper to go up by 9, 51-42. They kept the lead in the 7-9 point range for the next 6 minutes, then Toledo started creeping closer. The Michigan lead was down to 3 points (64-61) at the 10:09 mark, but UM kept pushing the lead back up to the 5-7 point range, with Toledo getting within 3 points a couple more times. Michigan finally pushed the lead up to the 10-12 point range, winning by 10. It was a solid win against the MAC regular season champions. As I had predicted, the crowd was pretty evenly divided, and it didn't feel like a home game for Michigan.

The Vanderbilt game started out well, with Michigan grabbing a quick 5-0 lead, then UM went stone cold. Vanderbilt ripped off a 17-0 run, and the score was 17-5, at the 12:53 mark. Michigan fought back, and tied it up (20-20) with 9:21 to go. The lead went back and forth for the rest of the half, with neither team leading by more than 3 points. Michigan scored last in the half, and led by one point (30-29) at halftime. The lead went back and forth a couple more times at the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, before Michigan started pulling away. UM led by 10 (52-42) at the 10:52 mark, and kept the lead in the 6-8 point range for most of the rest of the half. With 1:45 left in the game, Michigan had an 8-point lead (65-57), and they got a big stop on defense. With 1:07 to go, Michigan missed an easy layup, and the rest of the game was a nightmare. If UM had made that layup, they would have won the game. Instead, they committed dumb fouls and made dumber turnovers, and didn't even attempt another shot until the last 2 seconds. It was disgusting to watch.

### **Stats**

[The game stats for the Toledo game](#) were fabulous. Michigan shot very well overall (32-for-55 = 58.2%), they shot 3-pointers very well (13-for-23 = 56.5%), and they shot free throws very well (13-for-16 = 81.3%). They won the rebounding battle handily (39-29), but they lost the turnover battle badly (14-4). They won this game with excellent shooting.

[The game stats for the Vanderbilt game](#) were weak. Michigan shot poorly overall (23-for-53 = 43.4%), they shot 3-pointers poorly (3-for-12 = 25.0%), but they did shoot free throws well (16-for-19 = 84.2%). They won the rebounding battle handily (39-23), but they lost the turnover battle badly (15-7). They lost this game with poor shooting and turnovers.

### **Who Started?**

The starters for the Toledo game were [Joey Baker](#), [Kobe Bufkin](#), [Hunter Dickinson](#), [Dug McDaniel](#), and [Will Tschetter](#). Baker started in place of [Jett Howard](#), who is still nursing an ankle injury, and didn't play in either game.

The starters for the Vanderbilt game were [Joey Baker](#), [Hunter Dickinson](#), [Youssef Khayat](#), [Dug McDaniel](#), and [Terrance Williams II](#). Bufkin also had an ankle injury for the Vanderbilt game, so Khayat started in his place. Bufkin didn't play in the Vanderbilt game. Williams started in place of Tschetter, who came off the bench.

### **Who Looked Good?**

Dickinson was great in both games, with 19 and 21 points. He also had 9 and 11 rebounds, so he had another double-double vs. Vanderbilt.

McDaniel had a great week, scoring 16 and 19 points. He was very efficient in the Toledo game, shooting 4-for-6, all from deep. He also had 8 assists that game. Wow! He wasn't quite as efficient in the Vanderbilt game, shooting 7-for-14 (2-for-4 from deep).

Bufkin was the high scorer for Michigan in the Toledo game, with 23 points, along with 8 rebounds. It sure would have helped to have him vs. Vanderbilt.

Baker was the big (pleasant) surprise in the Toledo game. After averaging about 5 points/game for the regular season, he caught fire vs. Toledo, scoring a season-high 21 points. He shot very well: 8-for-11 overall, 5-for-7 from deep. He also hit double figures in the Vanderbilt game, with 11 points, but he sure didn't shoot well in that one: 3-for-10 overall, 0-for-3 from deep.

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

Williams should get a separate section for "worse than not-so-good". He actually was respectable in the Toledo game (4 points and 7 rebounds), and decent for the first 39 minutes of the Vanderbilt game (6 points and 5 rebounds), but he singlehandedly lost the Vanderbilt game in the final 67 seconds. He had 2 turnovers and a foul, and he should have been credited with a 3<sup>rd</sup> turnover on a pass from McDaniel that he should have been able to chase down. He didn't do a single positive thing in those 67 seconds. Ugh.

Tschetter was ineffective, scoring 5 and 0 points.

Khayat was ineffective, scoring 0 and 3 points. He hit a nice 3-pointer very early in the Vanderbilt game, and he grabbed 3 rebounds, but that was it.

[Tarris Reed, Jr.](#) was ineffective, scoring 0 and 5 points.

[Jace Howard](#) was ineffective, scoring 2 and 0 points.

### **Who Else Played?**

No one else played.

### **Who Didn't Play?**

[Isaiah Barnes](#) and [Gregg Glenn III](#) were the scholarship players who didn't get to play in either game. Barnes announced after the game that he is entering the transfer portal.

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

### **What Does It Mean?**

Michigan seriously underperformed this season. Check back next week for the Season Wrap-up, where I'll try to figure out what went wrong.

**What's Next?**

Clean out the lockers. The season is over.

Check back next week for the Season Wrap-up, Final Grades, and Looking Ahead.

Go Blue!