

Nothing But 'Net – Week #07 – 12/11/2023 – Big Ten Split

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they lost one and won the other. [On Tuesday \(12/05/2023\), they lost to Indiana 78-75](#) in Crisler Arena, then [on Sunday \(12/10/2023\), they won at Iowa 90-80](#). Both games were in the Big Ten. The loss and win leave Michigan with a record of 5-5 (1-1 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

These were two games that Michigan could have easily lost, so winning one of them is a bonus. Winning a road game in the Big Ten is no easy feat, and Michigan has had a tough time winning at Iowa, so this win is doubly surprising, and doubly sweet. The Indiana game was close and exciting, and Michigan could have won that one as well.

Game Flow

The Indiana game was close for the whole game, with neither team leading by more than 7 points. IU led for most of the 1st half, but Michigan kept it close. With 1:12 left in the half, it was all tied up (37-37). Michigan scored with 43 seconds to go, and led by 2 points at halftime, 39-37. The 2nd half was more of the same, except that Michigan led for most of the time. With 8:59 to go, Michigan led by 6 points, 59-53. IU went ahead, 60-59, and then the lead went back and forth, with several ties (60-60, 62-62, 64-64, 66-66, 69-69, 71-71, and 73-73). It was 73-73 with 1:23 to go, when IU went ahead by 2, and Michigan never quite caught up. As in the Oregon game last week, Michigan missed some key free throws and had some silly turnovers in the last couple minutes. If they can clean that up, they might win one of the close ones.

The Iowa game was also close for the first 22 minutes, with neither team leading by more than 5 points. Michigan led for most of the 1st half, but Iowa kept it close. It was all tied up, 33-33, with 1:52 left in the half, and Michigan made 2 free throws with 22 seconds left to lead by 2 points (35-33) at halftime. Iowa opened the 2nd half with a quick 4-0 run, for their last lead of the game, 37-35, with 19:13 to go. Michigan went on an 11-0 run to get a 9-point lead that they never surrendered, 46-37, with 16:38 left. Michigan pushed their lead to 11 points (53-42) at the 13:36 mark, and then they put the game away with a brilliant 9-0 run over the next 71 seconds. With 12:25 left, Michigan led by 20 points (62-42), and the game was over. Before Michigan emptied the bench and let the Scout Team play, Iowa never got closer than 14 points. The Scout Team played for the last 90 seconds, and they let Iowa make the score look more respectable, but that was a 20-point victory masquerading as a 10-point victory.

Stats

[The game stats for the Indiana game](#) were mediocre. Michigan shot decently overall (26-for-55 = 47.3%), they shot 3-pointers poorly (4-for-17 = 23.5%), and they shot free throws pretty well (19-for-24 = 79.2%). They tied in the rebounding battle (30-30), and barely lost the turnover battle (14-13). They lost this game with poor 3-point shooting.

[The game stats for the Iowa game](#) were only a little better. Michigan shot decently overall (29-for-60 = 48.3%), they shot 3-points fairly well (9-for-24 = 37.5%), and they shot free throws well (23-for-28 = 82.1%). They won the rebounding battle (41-32), but lost the turnover battle (13-10). They won this game with shooting and rebounding.

Who Started?

The starters were [Nimari Burnett](#), [Dug McDaniel](#), [Olivier Nkamhoua](#), [Tarris Reed, Jr.](#), and [Terrance Williams II](#).

Who Looked Good?

Nkamhoua was the leading scorer vs. Indiana (18 points), and he had 12 points and 10 rebounds vs. Iowa, for another double-double.

McDaniel hit double figures in both games (13 and 11 points), but he had a terrible week shooting: 3-for-14 overall (0-for-4 from deep) vs. Indiana, and 4-for-12 overall (1-for-5 from deep) vs. Iowa. After his brilliant shooting in the Oregon game, it was painful to watch him shoot and miss so much this week.

Williams was the only other starter to hit double figures in both games, with 10 points vs. Indiana and 13 points vs. Iowa. He had a pretty good week shooting 3-pointers: 2-for-5 vs. Indiana and 3-for-6 vs. Iowa. He's been playing the best basketball of his career lately, and I hope he keeps it up.

Reed was the undisputed star of the Iowa game, with a career-high 19 points, on 7-for-10 shooting. He even shot free throws well (for him): 5-for-7. Add in 6 rebounds and 3 blocked shots, and that's the kind of game Michigan needs from him consistently. Unfortunately, he only had 5 points vs. Indiana, which is closer to his average.

Burnett had one mediocre game (4 points vs. Indiana) and one good game (14 points vs. Iowa). He shot poorly vs. Iowa: 4-for-11 (2-for-8 from deep).

[Will Tschetter](#) came in off the bench and played very well in both games, with 17 and 10 points. He was red-hot vs. Indiana (6-for-7 overall, 1-for-2 from deep), and he shot pretty well vs. Iowa (3-for-6 overall, 1-for-2 from deep).

[Tray Jackson](#) played pretty well off the bench, with 5 and 8 points.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

All the mainstream players looked good this week.

Who Else Played?

[Ian Burns](#) played in the Iowa game, but didn't attempt a shot.

[Youssef Khayat](#) played in the Iowa game, and scored 2 points on free throws.

[Jaelin Llewellyn](#) played in the Indiana game, but not the Iowa game. He hit his only shot attempt vs. IU, a 3-pointer.

[Jackson Selvala](#) played in the Iowa game, but didn't attempt a shot.

[Cooper Smith](#) played in the Iowa game, but didn't attempt a shot.

[George Washington III](#) played in the Iowa game, and hit one of his two free throws.

Who Didn't Play?

[Harrison Hochberg](#) didn't play in either game.

[Jace Howard](#) is still recovering from an injury, and not playing yet. He's expected back "later in the season".

What Does It Mean?

It's great that Michigan won one of their two December Big Ten games, especially on the road against one of the teams they're expected to battle with in the lower half of the Big Ten standings. It's a shame that they let the upset bid vs. Indiana slip away. Still, they're looking

like the 10-21 team I predicted. They have yet to win a close game, and they're likely to see many close games the rest of the season.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan only plays one game. On Saturday (12/16/2023, 2:30 p.m., BTN), they play Eastern Michigan in Crisler Arena.

[Eastern Michigan](#) is currently 5-4, with no impressive wins, and a few embarrassing losses: Butler (94-55), (#10) Florida Atlantic (100-57), North Dakota, and Oakland. They don't have any noteworthy players (Emoni Bates was there last season, but he's in the G-League now), but they do have some height: a 6'11" player and a 7-footer. This is a game that Michigan should win, but so was Long Beach State. If UM plays a good clean game, they should beat EMU, but if they start turning the ball over and missing free throws, who knows.

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

Go Blue!