

Nothing But 'Net – Week #14 – 01/29/2024 – A Truly Lousy Week

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they lost both of them. [On Tuesday \(01/23/2024\), they lost at \(#2\) Purdue 99-67](#), then [on Saturday \(01/27/2024\), they lost to Iowa 88-78](#) in Crisler Arena. The two losses lower Michigan's record to 7-13 (2-7 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

This was truly a lousy week for Michigan basketball. Losing on the road to the #2 team in the nation is no disgrace, but losing by 32 points hurts. Losing at home to a lower-division team that you beat 6 weeks ago is bad, but losing by double digits is worse. Michigan's season is spiraling down the drain more each week.

Game Flow

The Purdue game was never close. UM was within one point (3-2) very early, then the roof fell in. Purdue was up by 11 points (15-4) with 14:59 to go, and they kept the lead around 11 points for the next 10 minutes. It was still 11 points (34-23) at the 3:21 mark, when Purdue ripped off a 15-2 run to end the half, up 24 points (49-25). All Purdue had to do in the 2nd half was keep the lead at or above 20 points, and that's what they did. The lead got as high as 35 points, before ending at 32 points. It was total domination by Purdue. Michigan never stood a chance.

The Iowa game was close early, with the score tied at 2-2, 8-8, 18-18, and 22-22. Iowa led 27-26 with 7:34 to go in the 1st half, when Michigan went on a 10-0 run to lead by 9 points (36-27) with 5:32 left. That was the high-water mark for Michigan. As they have done so many times this season, they got a decent lead, then threw it away. It was still 6 points (44-38) with 1:10 to go in the half, but it was down to 2 points (44-42) at halftime. The first 3:14 of the 2nd half was the worst sequence for Michigan this season, at that's saying something. Iowa ran off a quick 10-0 run, to go up by 8 points (52-44) with 16:46 to go. During that stretch, Michigan committed two fouls and one turnover, missed four 2-point shots, and missed two 3-point attempts. And that was it: they went from 9 points up to 8 points down, and never led again. They did make a couple runs at the lead, getting within 1 point once (67-66 with 10:06 left), but Iowa led comfortably the rest of the way.

Stats

[The game stats for the Purdue game](#) were miserable. Michigan shot poorly overall (23-for-68 = 33.8%), they shot 3-pointers poorly (9-for-29 = 31.0%), but they did shoot free throws well (12-for-15 = 80.0%). They lost the rebounding battle badly (46-37), but they tied the turnover battle (7-7). They lost this game with poor shooting and rebounding.

[The game stats for the Iowa game](#) were weak. Michigan shot pretty poorly overall (27-for-63 = 42.9%), they shot 3-pointers pretty poorly (9-for-26 = 34.6%), and they shot free throws pretty well (15-for-20 = 75.0%). They won the rebounding battle (32-29) and the turnover battle (9-11). They lost this game with poor 3-point defense: Iowa shot 8-for-16 from deep.

Who Started?

The starters for the Purdue game were [Nimari Burnett](#), [Jaelin Llewellyn](#), [Olivier Nkamhoua](#), [Tarris Reed, Jr.](#), and [Terrance Williams II](#). [Dug McDaniel](#) didn't travel with the team for the Purdue game (indefinite "road suspension"), but he started in place of Llewellyn in the Iowa game.

Who Looked Good?

Williams was the only Michigan player to hit double figures in both games, with 10 and 16 points. He had a lousy week shooting: 4-for-11 vs. Purdue, and 6-for-16 overall (2-for-8 from deep) vs. Iowa.

Nkamhoua had one decent game (13 points vs. Iowa) and one mediocre game (7 points vs. Purdue). He also had a lousy week shooting: 3-for-9 overall (1-for-5 from deep) vs. Purdue, and 5-for-12 overall (0-for-3 from deep) vs. Iowa.

Burnett also had one decent game (13 points vs. Iowa) and one mediocre game (7 points vs. Purdue). He had a lousy game shooting vs. Purdue: 2-for-9 overall (1-for-5 from deep), and a decent game shooting vs. Iowa: 4-for-10 overall (3-for-6 from deep).

Llewellyn had a great game as a starter vs. Purdue (16 points), but didn't attempt a shot off the bench vs. Iowa.

McDaniel scored 13 points in the Iowa game, and didn't play in the Purdue game. He shot poorly: 4-for-13 overall (1-for-5 from deep). He had 6 rebounds and 5 assists, vs. only 1 turnover.

[George Washington III](#) had the first good game of his career vs. Purdue, with 10 points on 2-for-4 shooting, all from deep, along with 4-for-4 from the free throw line. He didn't play in the Iowa game.

[Jace Howard](#) had 7 and 4 points off the bench.

[Will Tschetter](#) had 4 and 7 points off the bench.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Youssef Khayat](#) only played in the Purdue game, where he didn't score.

Reed had a mediocre week, with 6 and 7 points. He did have 10 and 7 rebounds.

Who Else Played?

[Ian Burns](#) played for 2 minutes vs. Purdue. He didn't attempt a shot.

[Harrison Hochberg](#) played for 3 minutes vs. Purdue. He didn't attempt a shot.

[Tray Jackson](#) finally returned to action, after missing 4 games with a concussion and broken bone in his nose. He scored 5 points. He played wearing a mask. It was good to have him back.

[Jackson Selvala](#) played for 3 minutes vs. Purdue. He didn't attempt a shot.

Who Didn't Play?

[Cooper Smith](#) (Scout Team) didn't play in either game. He is currently injured.

What Does It Mean?

That was a lousy week, in the middle of a lousy season. At this point, Michigan is just playing out the rest of the season, seeing if they can win a couple more games. I still don't see them winning more than 10 games.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan plays two games. On Tuesday (01/30/2024, 9:00 p.m., Peacock), they play at Michigan State, then on Saturday (02/03/2024, 4:00 p.m., BTN) they play Rutgers in Crisler Arena.

[Michigan State](#) is currently 12-8 overall (4-5 in Big Ten). They have an impressive win over (#6) Baylor, and unimpressive losses to James Madison, Nebraska, and Northwestern. They have a few noteworthy players (Tyson Walker, Jaden Akins, and Malik Hall), and they have some height: two 6'11" guys. For a team that started the season ranked in the Top-5, they have massively underachieved. However, they are still dangerous. The way Michigan has been playing recently, I don't expect this to be a close game, say a 15-20 point loss.

[Rutgers](#) is currently 10-9 overall (2-6 in Big Ten). They have impressive wins over Seton Hall, Indiana, and Nebraska, and unimpressive losses to Princeton, Wake Forest, Ohio State, and Iowa. They don't have any noteworthy players, but they do have some height: a 6'10" player and a 6'11" player. This could be Michigan's last good opportunity for a win, but they'll have to play better than they've been playing recently.

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

Go Blue!