

## **Nothing But 'Net – Week #17 – 02/19/2024 – Another Lost Week In A Lost Season**

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they lost both of them. [On Tuesday \(02/13/2024\), they lost at \(#14\) Illinois 97-68](#), then [on Saturday \(02/17/2024\), they lost to Michigan State 73-63](#) in Crisler Arena. The two losses lower Michigan's record to 8-18 (3-12 in Big Ten).

### **What Happened?**

It was another lost week in a lost season for the basketball team. They were crushed in the Illinois game, but they put up a good fight in the MSU game, until the last 7 minutes. More about that below.

### **Game Flow**

The first few minutes of the Illinois game were OK. The game was tied at 2-2, and Michigan actually led 5-4 with 16:20 left in the 1<sup>st</sup> half. That was Michigan's only lead of the game. The score was tied 7-7, and Michigan was only down one point (10-9) with 14:22 to go. That was the last time it was close. Illinois went on a 12-2 run to make the score 22-11, and they kept the lead in the 7-9 point range for most of the half. Michigan snuck back within 3 points (28-25) at the 4:48 mark, but that seemed to wake Illinois up, and they went on a 19-4 run to end the half, up 18 points, 47-29. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half was a disaster. Illinois quickly pushed their lead up to 30 points (67-37) with 14:51 to go. It got as high as 37 points, before Illinois put in their subs and scrubs for the last 5 minutes. That allowed Michigan to get as close as 28 points, losing by 29. It was a good old-fashioned butt-whipping.

The 1<sup>st</sup> half of the MSU game was a close, seesaw affair, with both teams building up small leads. The game should have been tied 37-37 at halftime, but the refs made a terrible call and gave MSU 2 free throws with 0.4 seconds left, so MSU led 39-37 at halftime. Michigan has had a terrible time with the first few minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half all season, but not in this game. With 16:45 to go, Michigan was ahead, 48-43. Instead of wilting, Michigan kept the lead, and actually increased it a little: 53-47 at the 13:13 mark. MSU tied it (56-56) with 11:28 to go, then went ahead. In many games this season, once Michigan fell behind in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, they were done. Not this time: they tied it up 61-61, then 63-63, at the 7:01 mark. Let's take a minute to look at that score, then remember the final score (73-63). Yes, that means that Michigan didn't score a single point in the last 7:01 of the game. In that stretch, they missed 2 2-point attempts, they missed 2 3-point attempts, they committed 5 turnovers, and they committed 4 fouls. That's some miserable basketball.

### **Stats**

[The game stats for the Illinois game](#) were horrible, just horrible. Michigan shot decently overall (24-for-57 = 42.1%), they shot 3-pointers horribly (1-for-10 = 10.0%), and they shot free throws poorly (19-for-28 = 67.9%). They lost the rebounding battle (38-29) and the turnover battle (11-9). They lost this game with horrible 3-point shooting and poor rebounding.

[The game stats for the MSU game](#) were mediocre. Michigan shot fairly well overall (24-for-53 = 45.3%), they shot 3-pointers decently (7-for-20 = 35.0%), and they shot free throws poorly (8-for-12 = 66.7%). They actually won the rebounding battle (35-31), but they lost the turnover battle spectacularly (22-10). They lost this game with WAY too many turnovers.

### **Who Started?**

The starters for the Illinois 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 Illinois game (indefinite "road suspension"), so Llewellyn started in his place.

The starters for the MSU game were Burnett, Llewellyn, McDaniel, Nkamhoua, and Reed. Williams didn't play, due to an undisclosed injury or illness.

### **Who Looked Good?**

Reed had a good week, with double figures in both games: 13 vs. Illinois and 15 vs. MSU. He also had 7 and 11 rebounds, giving him a double-double vs. MSU.

Nkamhoua hit double figures in both games, with 13 and 11 points. Unfortunately, he was a turnover machine vs. MSU, with 8!

Williams had a good game in his only game this week, with 17 points vs. Illinois.

McDaniel hit double figures in the one game he played in (MSU), with 13 points. On the downside, he shot poorly (4-for-13 overall), and he had 5 turnovers.

Burnett had one good game (10 points vs. MSU) and one mediocre game (6 points vs. Illinois).

Llewellyn had one good game (12 points vs. MSU) and one mediocre game (4 points vs. Illinois). He shot poorly: 1-for-7 (0-for-3 from deep) vs. Illinois, and 4-for-11 (2-for-6 from deep) vs. MSU.

[Will Tschetter](#) had a mixed week off the bench, with 8 points vs. Illinois and 2 points vs. MSU. He shot well vs. Illinois (3-for-4 overall, 1-for-1 from deep) and terribly vs. MSU (1-for-6 overall, 0-for-3 from deep). His 2 points vs. MSU were all the bench points for that game. Ugh.

[Tray Jackson](#) also had a mixed week off the bench, with 6 points vs. Illinois and 0 points vs. MSU. Michigan needs a lot more production from him.

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

[George Washington III](#) played in both games, but didn't score. He played for 18 minutes vs. Illinois, and shot terribly: 0-for-4 overall, 0-for-3 from deep. He played for 2 minutes vs. MSU, and didn't attempt a shot.

### **Who Else Played?**

[Ian Burns](#) played the last 2 minutes of the Illinois game, and went 1-for-2 from the free throw line.

[Jackson Selvala](#) played the last 3 minutes of the Illinois game, but didn't attempt a shot.

[Cooper Smith](#) played the last minute of the Illinois game, but didn't attempt a shot.

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

[Jace Howard](#) and [Youssef Khayat](#) were the scholarship players who didn't play this week. They are both reported to be injured.

[Harrison Hochberg](#) was the only Scout Team player who didn't play this week.

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

With 18 losses, Michigan is now officially eliminated from the NIT. The only way they can make it to a postseason tournament is to win the Big Ten Tournament, guaranteeing them a spot in the Big Dance, but that's extremely unlikely.

## **What's Next?**

The season drones on. This week, Michigan plays two games. On Thursday (02/22/2024, 9:00 p.m. EST, FS1), they play at Northwestern, then on Sunday (02/25/2024, 2:00 p.m., CBS) they play (#2) Purdue in Crisler Arena.

[Northwestern](#) is currently 18-8 (9-6 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#1) Purdue, Michigan State, and (#10) Illinois, and puzzling losses to Mississippi State, Chicago State, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Rutgers. They have one noteworthy player: Boo Buie. He always gives Michigan problems. They also have some height: a 6'10" player and a 7-footer. As a side note, they also have 3 players named Blake (Barkley, Preston, and Smith). This is not your grandfather's Northwestern team – they're talented and they're winning. They stand a good chance at making the Big Dance. It would be quite a surprise if Michigan managed to beat them, especially on the road. I expect a 10-15 point loss.

[Purdue](#) is currently 23-3 (12-3 in Big Ten). Michigan played at Purdue back on 01/23/2024, and they got their butts kicked, 99-67. I expect more of the same in Ann Arbor, probably a 20-25 point loss.

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

Go Blue!