

Nothing But 'Net – Week #05 – 11/11/2024 – A Short Honeymoon?

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they won one and lost one. [On Monday \(11/04/2024\), they beat Cleveland State 101-53](#) in Crisler Arena, then [on Sunday \(11/10/2024\), they lost to Wake Forest 72-70](#) in Greensboro, NC. With the win and the loss, Michigan's record is now 1-1.

What Happened?

Michigan looked great in dismantling an overmatched Cleveland State team, but they showed all their flaws in losing to Wake Forest. They play fast and loose, which worked fine against CSU, but not so much vs. WFU. When "fast and loose" works, it's fun and impressive. When it means "too many turnovers at key moments", it's not so much fun. Is the Dusty May honeymoon over? Maybe. We'll see. If they continue to play like they did for the last 21 minutes of the WFU game, it's going to be a long season.

Game Flow

Michigan never trailed in the CSU game, although it was tied briefly at 2-2. Once they got a 10-point lead (17-7 at the 13:38 mark), they kept it around 10 points for the next 4 minutes. With 8:52 left in the 1st half, Michigan was still up by 10 points (29-19). They finally pushed it over 10 points (30-19 with 8:53 left), then quickly got it up to 20 points (41-21 at the 4:06 mark). They pushed it as high as 28 points (54-26) at halftime.

The 2nd half was more of the same. Michigan kept building their lead, first to 30, then 40, then 50, winning by 48. It was a fun, impressive win.

The WFU game started out like the CSU game. Michigan never trailed in the 1st half, slowly opening up a nice lead. They were up 16-6 at the 12:19 mark, then 23-10 with 9:48 to go. They let WFU creep close, within 4 points (25-21 at the 4:48 mark), then pushed the lead back up to 11 points (35-24) with 1:51 to go. This was the high point of the game; from here on in it was all downhill. In the next 1:50, WFU went on a 10-0 run, to pull within 1 point (35-34) with 1 second left. This run was greatly aided by a missed shot by UM, a foul on UM, and 2 UM turnovers. The only good news is that Michigan managed to get off a half-court shot at the buzzer, and it went in! Michigan led by 4 points (38-34) at halftime.

The 2nd half was miserable. Michigan managed to hang onto their lead until the 16:41 mark, when WFU tied it up, 41-41. WFU went ahead for the first time, 44-43, with 15:56 left. For the next 6 minutes, the lead seesawed back and forth. With 11:20 to go, Michigan had their last good lead, 55-51, but WFU tied it up 57-57 at the 10:04 mark, then went up 59-57 at the 8:51 mark, and that was the game. WFU never trailed again. Michigan got within 2 points several times, and even within 1 point late in the game, but they never got the big stop or made the big basket when they needed it. It was a sad performance.

Stats

The [stats for the CSU game](#) were pretty good. Michigan shot very well overall (39-for-57 = 68.4%), they shot 3-pointers well (10-for-18 = 55.6%), but they didn't shoot free throws very well (13-for-22 = 59.1%). They won the rebounding battle (35-34) and the turnover battle (16-21). They won this game with good shooting.

The [stats for the WFU game](#) were just OK. Michigan shot fairly well overall (24-for-57 = 42.1%), they shot 3-pointers decently (10-for-33 = 30.3%), and they shot free throws pretty well (12-for-15 = 80.0%). They tied in the rebounding battle (33-33), but they lost the turnover battle (16-13). In a close game, those 3 extra turnovers made the difference.

Who Started?

The starters for both games were [Nimari Burnett](#), [Tre Donaldson](#), [Roddy Gayle Jr.](#), [Vladislav Goldin](#), and [Danny Wolf](#). [Rubin Jones](#) had started in both exhibition games instead of Burnett, but he was injured and didn't play at all in the CSU game, and came off the bench in the WFU game.

Who Looked Good?

Gayle was the leading scorer in the WFU game (11 points), and he had 13 points in the CSU game. He shot pretty well in the CSU game (6-for-8 overall, 1-for-2 from deep), but he shot pretty poorly vs. WFU (3-for-10 overall, 1-for-5 from deep).

Donaldson was the only other starter in double figures for both games, with 16 points vs. CSU and 10 points vs. WFU. He shot very well in the CSU game (4-for-4 overall, 2-for-2 from deep, 6-for-6 from the free throw line), and he shot fairly well in the WFU game (3-for-7 overall, 2-for-4 from deep). He's the player who hit the half-court buzzer-beater to end the 1st half vs. WFU.

Wolf was the star of the CSU game (19 points), but he was just so-so vs. WFU (4 points). He shot very well vs. CSU (8-for-10 overall, 1-for-1 from deep), but he just couldn't get anything going vs. WFU (2-for-6 overall, 0-for-3 from deep). He was the leading rebounder vs. CSU, with 13, for a very solid double-double.

[L.J. Cason](#) hit double figures in both games off the bench. He had 14 points vs. CSU, and 10 points vs. WFU. He shot pretty well in the CSU game (5-for-9 overall, 2-for-3 from deep), but he was off vs. WFU (4-for-10 overall, 0-for-5 from deep).

[Sam Walters](#) hit double figures in the CSU game (10 points), and got close in the WFU game (9 points). He shot well in both games: 3-for-4 overall, 2-for-3 from deep vs. CSU, and 3-for-5 (all 3-pointers) vs. WFU.

Burnett had one pretty good game (9 points vs. WFU) and one mediocre game (4 points vs. CSU).

Goldin also had one decent game (8 points vs. WFU) and one weak game (2 points vs. CSU).

[Will Tschetter](#) had one very good game (15 points vs. CSU) and one miserable game (0 points vs. WFU).

Jones only played in one game (WFU), and had 9 points.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Phat Phat Brooks](#) played in both games, scoring 4 points vs. CSU and 0 points vs. WFU.

Who Else Played?

[Ian Burns](#) played for 3 minutes in the CSU game, but didn't attempt a shot.

[Howard Eisley Jr.](#) played for 3 minutes in the CSU game, and missed his only shot attempt.

[Harrison Hochberg](#) played for 3 minutes in the CSU game, and scored 4 points.

[Jace Howard](#) played for 4 minutes in the CSU game, and missed all 3 of his free throw attempts.

[Charlie May](#) played for 3 minutes in the CSU game, and missed his only free throw attempt.

Who Didn't Play?

There is now only one injured player who didn't play in either game: [Justin Pippen](#).

What Does It Mean?

As promising as the opener vs. CSU was, the 2nd half of the WFU game wiped those memories away. Even with an almost completely new lineup and all new coaching staff, the 2nd half collapse looked a lot like many of the games last season: good for a while, then hopeless down the stretch. I was really hoping that this season's team could "get over the hump" and make the big stop or hit the big shot in the last 4 minutes, but no.

Of course, it's way too early to be thinking about postseason tournaments, but I still am. A win over Wake Forest on a neutral court would have been a nice entry on Michigan's tournament resume. Instead, it will be just another "almost win" that we've become so used to.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan only plays one game. On Friday (11/15/2024, 6:00 p.m., FS1), they play Texas Christian University (TCU) in Crisler Arena.

[TCU](#) is currently 2-0, but they haven't played anyone good yet. Last season, they were 21-13 (9-9 in the Big 12), losing in the 1st round of the NCAA Tournament. They had some good wins last season, and a couple bad losses, but this is a new team. They have one noteworthy player: Frankie Collins. He played his freshman season at Michigan, and he did very well. He was thought to be "the point guard of the future" at Michigan, and everyone was surprised when he left. He spent the last 2 seasons at Arizona State, and now he's at TCU. Besides Collins, TCU doesn't have any other noteworthy players, but they do have some height: a 6'10" guy and a 6'11" guy. This will be a tough game, a lot like the Wake Forest game. Michigan will have to play well to win this one.

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

Go Blue!