

## **Nothing But 'Net – Week #10 – 12/16/2024 – Finally Ranked? Time To Throw It Away!**

The (#14) University of Michigan men's basketball team only played one game this past week, and they lost it. [On Tuesday \(12/10/2024\), they lost to Arkansas 89-87](#) in Madison Square Garden, as part of the annual [Jimmy V Classic](#) doubleheader. Michigan's record is now 8-2 (2-0 in Big Ten).

### **What Happened?**

After more than a year, Michigan finally cracked the AP Top 25, checking in at #14. Yay! So, what did they do to celebrate? They threw away a winnable game vs. Arkansas. They built up a comfortable lead (15 points) in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, then threw most of it away by halftime, then the rest of it (and more) early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. They dug themselves into a hole that took the rest of the game to climb out of, only to lose the game in the final minute. What was the problem? Turnovers, again. Sigh.

### **Game Flow**

The game was close in the early going, with neither team getting a lead of more than 3 points. With 12:24 to go, Michigan led by 1 point (11-10), then they went on a nice 18-4 run to lead by 15 (29-14) at the 8:58 mark. The rest of the game was downhill from that point. Arkansas started clicking offensively, and Michigan started missing, and the 15-point lead was almost completely gone (46-45) with 0:33 left in the half. Michigan managed to hit a 3-pointer with 10 seconds left, so they led by 4 points (49-45) at halftime.

The start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half was a nightmare. In the first 4:30, Michigan went 0-for-2 on 2-point shots, 0-for-2 on 3-pointers, and committed one foul and five turnovers. During that same stretch, Arkansas went on a 12-0 run to lead 57-49. Arkansas kept the lead in the 9-10 point range for the next 4 minutes, and the score was 70-60 with 11:48 to go. A minute and a half later, it was 78-60, and Michigan was in big trouble. They didn't give up, and they managed to slowly fight their way back into the game. They got the deficit back down to 10 points (80-70) at the 7:59 mark, and 4 points (84-80) with 3:19 to go. It was a 1-point Arkansas lead (88-87) with 1:28 left, but Michigan couldn't buy a basket in the last 88 seconds, and lost by 2 points. They had numerous chances in the last minute, but they couldn't get a decent shot.

### **Stats**

The [game stats](#) were surprisingly good. Michigan shot well overall (34-for-59 = 57.6%), they shot 3-pointers well (8-for-18 = 44.4%), and they shot free throws decently (11-for-18 = 61.1%). They lost the rebounding battle (34-32) and the turnover battle (17-14). They lost this game with turnovers. Wait, they only lost the turnover battle by 3. Yeah, but they only had 5 turnovers at halftime, with 12 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, 5 of them in the crucial 4:30 to start the half. That's where they lost the game.

### **Who Started?**

The starters were [Nimari Burnett](#), [Tre Donaldson](#), [Roddy Gayle Jr.](#), [Vladislav Goldin](#), and [Danny Wolf](#).

### **Who Looked Good?**

Goldin was the high scorer again, with 17 points on great shooting: 7-for-9. He also had 9 rebounds and only 1 turnover. He did his part.

Wolf had a good game, with 14 points on decent shooting: 6-for-11 overall, 0-for-2 from deep. He also had 9 rebounds and 9 assists, but also 3 turnovers. He did his part.

Gayle had a pretty good game, with 13 points on so-so shooting: 6-for-13 overall, 0-for-2 from deep.

Burnett had 10 points on 4-for-8 shooting, 1-for-3 from deep.

Donaldson had 9 points on 3-for-7 shooting, 1-for-3 from deep.

[Will Tschetter](#) was the only bench player to hit double figures, with 13 points on nice shooting: 4-for-5 overall, 3-for-4 from deep.

[Sam Walters](#) finally scored again, after going scoreless in his last 4 games. He had 6 points, on 2-for-2 shooting from deep.

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

[Rubin Jones](#) had 2 points.

### **Who Else Played?**

[Justin Pippen](#) hit his first career 3-pointer, on 1-for-1 shooting.

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

[Phat Phat Brooks](#) and [L.J. Cason](#) were the mainstream players who didn't play in this game.

The Scout team didn't get in: [Ian Burns](#), [Howard Eisley Jr.](#), [Harrison Hochberg](#), [Jace Howard](#), and [Charlie May](#).

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

This would have been a huge win for Michigan, a huge boost to their post-season tournament resume, a huge boost to their confidence, and a chance to stay in the Top 25 for another week. Instead, they threw it all away. They may stay in the lower reaches of the Top 25 next week, but this was their last warning. If they lose their next game (see below), they're out of the Top 25, probably for at least a month.

### **What's Next?**

This week, Michigan only plays one game, but it's another big one. On Wednesday (12/18/2024, 9:00 p.m., ESPN2), they play (#13) Oklahoma in Charlotte, NC. This game is part of the annual [Jumpman Invitational](#) tournament.

[Oklahoma](#) is currently 10-0, with impressive wins over Arizona, Louisville, Georgia Tech, and Oklahoma State. They won the Battle 4 Atlantis in the Bahamas. They don't have any noteworthy players, but they have decent height: two 6'10" guys and one 6'11" guy. This will be yet another tough neutral court game for Michigan. OU is 10-0 for a reason. Michigan has come close in two tough games on neutral courts (Wake Forest and Arkansas), but they lost both of those games by 2 points each. They need to win one, and this is their last chance.

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

Go Blue!