

## **Nothing But 'Net – Week #13 – 01/06/2025 – Solid Big Ten Restart**

Happy New Year!

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played one game this past week, and they won it. [On Saturday \(01/04/2025\), they beat USC 85-74](#) in Los Angeles. Michigan's record is now 11-3 (3-0 in Big Ten).

### **What Happened?**

Every Big Ten team played two conference games in early December, including Michigan, who beat Wisconsin on the road and Iowa in Crisler. The last 3 weeks of December were all non-conference games for the Big Ten, but the conference schedule started up again with the new year. Michigan's schedule called for them to restart the Big Ten schedule on the road, in Los Angeles, to play two of the new Big Ten teams: USC and UCLA, formerly of the Pac-12. It was nice that the Big Ten scheduled both games a few days apart, so the team could fly out there just once and take care of both games in one trip. Michigan started the road trip with a bang, beating a good USC team on their home court.

### **Game Flow**

Michigan led for a good portion of the game, although there were a few stretches where the game was close, and there lots of ties and lead changes. Michigan opened up several good leads, then watched them fritter away. Fortunately, Michigan opened up a good lead in "crunch time", and they were able to protect it for the win.

UM started the game on fire, hitting their first 5 shots, all 3-pointers. They led 15-6 at the 16:01 mark, and it looked like they might run away with the game. Unfortunately, USC ripped off a 14-4 run, and suddenly USC was ahead (20-19) with 9:35 to go. For the next 8 minutes, the lead went back and forth, with a bunch of tie scores, and neither team got more than 2 points ahead. With 1:42 left in the half, USC was up 38-36, then Michigan scored the last 6 points of the half to lead at halftime, 42-38.

Just like the 1<sup>st</sup> half, Michigan opened the 2<sup>nd</sup> half on fire. USC scored first, to get within 2 points (42-40), then Michigan went on a 13-0 run, to open a 15-point lead (55-40) at the 16:03 mark. That was the high-water mark for Michigan. They let USC slowly creep back into the game, and it was all tied up (63-63) with 9:50 left. It was more than 2 minutes before either team scored again, and USC went up 65-63 with 7:33 to go. That was their last lead, as Michigan finally got going again, and opened up an 8-point lead (73-65) at the 5:09 mark. USC fought back, and got within 2 points (73-71) with 3:23 to go. Michigan responded with a 10-0 run to push the lead up to 12 points (83-71) with 0:49 left, and that was the game.

### **Stats**

The [game stats](#) were very good. Michigan shot well overall (29-for-55 = 52.7%), they shot 3-pointers well (10-for-24 = 41.7%), and they shot free throws well (17-for-21 = 80.9%). They won the rebounding battle (33-32), but they lost the turnover battle (14-12). They won this game with good shooting. By the way, the 3-point shooting number could have been much better. They started out 5-for-5, and shot a blazing 10-for-16 (62.5%) in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, but they shot 0-for-8 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

### **Who Started?**

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

### **Who Looked Good?**

All five starters hit double figures, so there were lots of players who looked good.

Wolf was the hero in this game, with a career-high 21 points, 13 rebounds (another double-double), 7 assists, and 6 blocked shots. Wow! He shot well: 9-for-12 overall, 2-for-3 from deep. He was great.

Burnett had 16 points, on pretty good shooting: 4-for-7 overall, 3-for-5 from deep.

Donaldson also had 16 points, on good shooting: 5-for-7 overall, 4-for-6 from deep. He hit his first four 3-point shots, all in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, and didn't score much in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

Gayle was the opposite of Donaldson: he was scoreless in the 1<sup>st</sup> half, then he exploded for 12 points in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half.

Goldin was the 5<sup>th</sup> starter in double figures, with 11 points. He shot pretty well: 4-for-7.

[Will Tschetter](#) was the only bench player to have much impact, with 5 points. He hit a key 3-pointer during a wild scramble late in the 1<sup>st</sup> half.

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

[L.J. Cason](#) had 2 points on free throws in 3 minutes of action.

[Rubin Jones](#) had 2 points on an acrobatic putback dunk of a missed shot.

[Justin Pippen](#) was scoreless on 0-for-3 shooting.

[Sam Walters](#) was scoreless on 0-for-2 shooting.

### **Who Else Played?**

No one else played.

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

[Phat Phat Brooks](#) and [Jace Howard](#) were the scholarship players who didn't play.

None of the Scout Team players played: [Ian Burns](#), [Howard Eisley Jr.](#), [Harrison Hochberg](#), and [Charlie May](#).

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

This was an important win for Michigan. It's tough to win on the road in the Big Ten, and there were so many intangibles working against Michigan in this game: the long flight out to the West Coast, the first time playing USC as a Big Ten member, USC wanting to guard their home court as a new member of the conference, and USC wanting to beat Michigan for former UM player Terrance Williams II, who is on USC's team but didn't play due to a wrist injury.

After the first 2 games in early December, there were 3 teams tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Big Ten at 2-0: Michigan, Michigan State, and UCLA. UCLA was upset by Nebraska this weekend, but MSU won their game, so now only UM and MSU are undefeated in league play, at 3-0.

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

This week, Michigan plays two games. On Tuesday (01/07/2025, 10:00 p.m. EST, Peacock), they play at (#15) UCLA, then on Sunday (01/12/2025, 2:00 p.m., BTN), they play Washington in Crisler Arena.

[UCLA](#) is currently 11-3 (2-1 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#12) Oregon, Arizona, and (#14) Gonzaga, and puzzling losses to New Mexico and Nebraska. They don't have any

noteworthy players, but they do have some height: a 6'10" player and a 7'3" player. The 7'3" guy is the tallest player Michigan has played this season. This will be a tough game for Michigan to win. UCLA has a great record in Pauley Pavilion, and they're in the Top 15 for a reason. This game will be a lot like the Michigan game at Wisconsin in early December: unranked Michigan at a Top-15 team on the road in a tough venue. Michigan won that one, and they can win this one, but they'll have to play their best game of the season.

[Washington](#) is currently 10-5 (1-3 in Big Ten), with an impressive win over (#24) Maryland, and losses to Nevada, UCLA, USC, Seattle, and Illinois. They don't have any noteworthy players, but they do have some height: two 6'10" guys and a 6'11" guy. This is a game that Michigan should win, but it won't be easy.

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

Go Blue!