

Nothing But 'Net – Week #15 – 01/20/2025 – Overtime Games, Good And Bad

The (#20) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they lost one and won the other. [On Thursday \(01/16/2025\), they lost at Minnesota 84-81 in overtime](#), then [on Sunday \(01/19/2025\), they beat Northwestern 80-76](#) in Crisler Arena, also in overtime. Michigan's record is now 14-4 (6-1 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

The Minnesota game was so sad. Michigan is obviously way better than Minnesota, but they picked the wrong time to play the worst half of the season, and it cost them. The Northwestern game wasn't much better. Michigan is obviously better than Northwestern, but they almost gave that game away as well. Still, a win, even a shaky win, is better than a loss.

Game Flow

Michigan led for most of the 1st half vs. Minnesota, but the 2nd half was a nightmare. Michigan went ahead 7-5 at the 16:22 mark, and kept the lead in the 3-5 point range for the next few minutes. Minnesota came back, and even briefly led, 15-14, at the 11:01 mark. Michigan regained the lead, and kept it in the 4-6 point range for a while. Once again, Minnesota crept back, and they were within 1 point (30-29) with 4:23 to go in the 1st half. Michigan went on a nice 10-0 run, to lead 40-29 with 1:23 left. Minnesota scored 2 more points, to make it 40-31 at halftime.

The 2nd half was "slow death". Minnesota crept closer and closer, getting within 4 points (45-41) at the 17:06 mark, before Michigan pushed their lead back up to 10 points (51-41) with 12:50 to go. It only took Minnesota a little over 2 minutes to erase that deficit, and it was tied 51-51 with 10:17 left. Michigan regained the lead, and kept it in the 3-5 point range for the next few minutes, still leading by 3 points (61-58) at the 5:17 mark. Minnesota went back ahead 64-61 with 3:30 to go, but Michigan tied it right up, 64-64, and the rest of regulation was a back-and-forth affair, with neither team getting more than 2 points ahead. Michigan led by 2 points (71-69) with 7 seconds left, but Minnesota hit 2 free throws to send the game into overtime.

Overtime was not good. Minnesota hit a 3-pointer to start, and never trailed. However, Michigan did tie it up 81-81 with 7 seconds left, but Minnesota hit a 40-foot buzzer-beater to win by 3 points. It was a heartbreaking loss.

The Northwestern game was a disaster waiting to happen, but Michigan managed to play just well enough to win, barely. NU jumped out to an early lead (7-0) at the 17:03 mark, and still led by 4 points (9-5) with 13:10 to go. Yes, Michigan only scored 5 points in the first 8 minutes. Michigan finally caught up and went ahead (10-9) with 11:11 left. For the next 5 minutes, the teams traded baskets and the lead, with neither team getting more than 5 points ahead. At the 5:19 mark, Michigan led by 5 points (25-20), and it felt like they were finally going to open a comfortable lead and take control of the game. Hah! NU went on a 15-5 run to end the half, up 35-30 at halftime.

The 2nd half was more of the same. Michigan managed to catch and pass NU again, up 38-37 at the 17:50 mark. The rest of the 2nd half was a see-saw battle, with lots of ties and lead changes, and neither team getting more than 4 points ahead. The score was tied 65-65 at the end of regulation; on to overtime, again.

The overtime period was also close and exciting, but Michigan never trailed. NU tied it up once, and Michigan never got more than 4 points ahead, but they made just enough plays and free throws to hang on for the win.

Stats

[The stats for the Minnesota game](#) were surprisingly pretty good. Michigan shot pretty well overall (28-for-62 = 45.2%), they shot 3-pointers well (11-for-22 = 50.0%), and they shot free throws pretty well (14-for-20 = 70.0%). They won the rebounding battle (44-39), but they lost the turnover battle (13-6). They lost this game due to turnovers.

[The stats for the Northwestern game](#) were pretty sad. Michigan shot poorly overall (22-for-61 = 36.1%), they shot 3-pointers pretty poorly (7-for-27 = 25.9%), and they shot free throws well enough (29-for-37 = 78.4%). They lost the rebounding battle (39-41), but they won the turnover battle (11-14). They won this game with free throw shooting: Michigan scored 29 points at the free throw line, while NU scored 23 points (23-for-31). By the way, that's 68 free throw attempts combined. It was a slow, over-officiated game.

Who Started?

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

Who Looked Good?

Goldin was the star again this week. He was the leading scorer in the NU game, with 31 points, and the 2nd leading scorer in the Minnesota game, with 18 points. He shot pretty well in the NU game (9-for-16 overall, 3-for-6 from deep, 10-for-12 from the free throw line), but not as well vs. Minnesota (5-for-15 overall, 1-for-2 from deep, 7-for-10 from the free throw line). He also had 8 rebounds in each game. Once again, I have to point out that he had never attempted a 3-pointer in the first 4 years of his career, and now he's 9-for-16 (56.3%) this season, including 4-for-8 this week. Amazing.

Wolf had one very good game (23 points vs. Minnesota) and one very bad game (4 points vs. Northwestern). He shot very well in the Minnesota game (8-for-10 overall, 3-for-3 from deep, 4-for-5 from the free throw line), and terribly vs. Northwestern (0-for-7 overall, 0-for-2 from deep, 4-for-8 from the free throw line). He did have 10 rebounds vs. Minnesota, and 13 vs. NU, along with 7 assists vs. Minnesota.

Donaldson hit double figures in both games, with 14 and 10 points.

Gayle had one lousy game (2 points vs. Minnesota) and one decent game (10 points vs. NU). He shot terribly in the Minnesota game (0-for-6 overall, 0-for-3 from deep), and a little better in the NU game (4-for-10 overall, 0-for-1 from deep).

Burnett had one weak game (6 points vs. Minnesota) and one good game (13 points vs. NU).

[Will Tschetter](#) had one very good game (15 points vs. Minnesota) and one lousy game (2 points vs. NU).

[Rubin Jones](#) contributed significantly in the NU game (8 points), and chipped in 3 points vs. Minnesota.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Sam Walters](#) played in both games, didn't attempt a shot vs. Minnesota, and missed his only shot attempt in the NU game.

Who Else Played?

[Justin Pippen](#) played in both games, and missed his only shot attempt in each game.

Who Didn't Play?

[Phat Phat Brooks](#), [L.J. Cason](#), and [Jace Howard](#) were the scholarship players who didn't play in either game.

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

What Does It Mean?

It always hurts to take that first loss in a conference game, and the Minnesota game hurt more than most. Michigan was tied for 1st place in the conference standings, and Minnesota was 0-6 and in dead last place. It should have been a straightforward win for Michigan, but instead it was a frustrating loss. The loss knocked UM out of 1st place in the league, although they're still in a good position: 3rd place, half a game behind Purdue. They certainly can't afford to lose to another non-contender.

The Northwestern game was a battle for survival. Michigan could not afford to lose to another lower-division team, especially at home. That they had to go to overtime to beat NU is kind of scary.

So, Michigan is still on track for getting into the NCAA Tournament, currently with a pretty good seed. There are still lots of games to be played (13), but as long as Michigan can avoid any more upset losses, they'll be fine.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan only plays one game. On Friday (01/24/2025, 8:00 p.m., Fox), they play at (#17) Purdue.

[Purdue](#) is currently 15-4 (7-1 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over (#2) Alabama, North Carolina State, (#23) Mississippi, and (#13) Oregon, and an unimpressive loss to Penn State. They finally graduated Zach Edey, but they still have a couple noteworthy players: Fletcher Loyer and Braden Smith. As usual, they have lots of height: a 7'4" player, a 7'2" player, a 6'11" player, and a 6'10" player. The 7'4" guy doesn't play much (2 games, 26 minutes, 13 points), and the 7'2" guy has only scored 30 points, so neither of them are Zach Edey 2.0, at least not yet. Michigan always has a tough time playing at Purdue, and I expect this game to be another tough one.

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

Go Blue!