

Nothing But 'Net – Week #19 – 02/17/2025 – First Place

The (#20) University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week, and they won both of them. [On Tuesday \(02/11/2025\), they beat \(#7\) Purdue 75-73](#) in Crisler Arena, then [on Sunday \(02/16/2025\), they beat Ohio State 86-83](#) in Columbus. Michigan's record is now 20-5 (12-2 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

When Michigan beat Purdue on Tuesday evening, they climbed into a tie for first place in the Big Ten with Michigan State. When MSU lost to Indiana later that evening, Michigan moved into first place all by themselves. They had to beat Ohio State on Sunday to stay alone in first place, and they did it. They have now won 6 games in a row, all by 2-4 points.

Obviously, these were two huge wins for Michigan, for many reasons; Purdue, because they were highly ranked, because they had thrashed Michigan in West Lafayette a couple weeks ago, because Michigan was (and still is) undefeated at home this season, and because it was a battle for first place. Ohio State, because it's a rivalry game, because they were favored, because it was another road win, and because Michigan wanted to stay in first place all alone.

Game Flow

The Purdue game started off very poorly, just like the disastrous game in West Lafayette a couple weeks ago. In that one, Purdue led 6-0 in less than 2 minutes, on their way to a deflating 13-2 lead. In this game, Purdue led 7-0 in less than 2 minutes (18:04 mark), and it was looking like another Purdue blowout. Fortunately, Michigan didn't let this one get out of hand, going ahead 15-14 with 13:18 to go. Purdue quickly went back on top, and kept their lead in the 3-5 point range for the next 4 minutes. With 9:45 left in the half, Purdue was up 24-20, but Michigan let them push their lead up to 8 points (32-24) with 5:02 to go. Things were starting to look grim, and Purdue expanded their lead to 11 points (37-26) at the 3:46 mark. Fortunately, Michigan scored the last 9 points of the half to pull within 2 points (37-35) at halftime.

After all that hard work to make the game close again, Michigan opened the 2nd half by giving up an 11-3 Purdue run, which pushed their lead back up to 10 points (48-38) with 14:44 to go. Purdue kept that lead in the 7-9 point range for the next 5 minutes, and they were up by 8 points (53-45) at the 9:17 mark. Michigan finally started making some progress, and got the deficit down to 3 points (53-50) with 8:11 to go, then 1 point (55-54) with 6:32 left. They tied it up (57-57) at the 6:01 mark, and the game was a see-saw battle the rest of the way, with neither team able to pull more than 4 points ahead. Michigan finally got ahead by 6 points (73-67) with 39 seconds left, and traded points with Purdue down the stretch to win by 3 points. It was an impressive win.

The OSU game was a see-saw battle from the beginning, with neither team able to get more than a 4 point lead for the first 7 minutes. OSU got their biggest lead of the game (5 points) at the 13:10 mark, 21-16. Michigan went on an 8-0 run to pull ahead 24-21 with 10:19 to go. The lead went back and forth for the next few minutes, and OSU had their last lead of the half (29-28) at the 7:31 mark. Michigan went on a 7-0 run to lead 35-29 with 5:48 to go, then let OSU creep back within 2 points (35-33) with 2:35 left. Fortunately, Michigan outscored OSU 9-6 before halftime, to lead 44-39 at the break.

OSU tightened things up to start the 2nd half, and got within 1 point (46-45) at the 18:59 mark. Michigan stayed ahead, but OSU got within 2 points a couple times (51-49, 53-51, 59-57, and 61-59), before tying it up (61-61) with 13:37 to go. The lead went back and forth, with many ties, and Michigan was leading by 1 point (71-70) with 7:06 left. Michigan led for a while, by 2-4 points, but OSU tied it up again (80-80) at the 2:06 mark. Michigan pulled ahead for good, up 84-80 with 52 seconds left, and made enough free throws and got enough stops to win by 3 points.

Stats

[The stats for the Purdue game](#) were just OK. Michigan shot decently overall (25-for-56 = 44.6%), they shot 3-pointers decently (7-for-23 = 30.4%), and they shot free throws pretty well (18-for-26 = 69.2%). They lost the rebounding battle (38-34), and tied in the turnover battle (11-11). For the 4th game in a row, they won this game at the free throw line. They scored 18 points at the free throw line vs. 6 (for 8) for Purdue.

[The stats for the OSU game](#) were also just OK. Michigan shot decently overall (33-for-68 = 48.5%), they shot 3-pointers decently (7-for-21 = 33.3%), and they shot free throws well (13-for-17 = 76.5%). They won the rebounding battle handily (46-31), but lost the turnover battle (12-9). They won this game with rebounding and (relatively) low turnovers.

Who Started?

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

Who Looked Good?

What a great forecourt Michigan has this season! Wolf and Goldin have been among the high scorers in almost every game, and this week was no exception.

Wolf was the leading scorer in the Purdue game, with 15 points, and the 2nd leading scorer in the OSU game, with 17 points. He also had 11 rebounds vs. OSU, for another double-double. He almost had a double-double vs. Purdue, with 9 rebounds.

Goldin was the leading scorer in the OSU game, with 20 points, and the 3rd leading scorer in the Purdue game with 12 points. He also had 10 rebounds vs. OSU, for another double-double. Yes, both Wolf and Goldin had double-doubles vs. OSU.

Welcome back, [Roddy Gayle Jr.](#) After a string of forgettable performances that cost him his starting role, Gayle responded with 14 points vs. Purdue and 9 more vs. OSU. The win over OSU was particularly sweet for him, since he played for 2 years at OSU.

Donaldson had a good game vs. Purdue (12 points), and a decent game vs. OSU (8 points). He shot pretty well vs. Purdue (4-for-8 overall, 2-for-3 from deep), but he had a rough time vs. OSU (3-for-10 overall, 0-for-4 from deep).

Burnett had a steady week, with 9 and 11 points.

Jones had a decent week, with 6 and 8 points. It was good to see him play with confidence and score a few points this week, after a few forgettable games.

[Will Tschetter](#) chipped in 5 and 8 points off the bench this week.

[L.J. Cason](#) chipped in 2 and 5 points off the bench this week. It was good to see him get in there again and contribute.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

No one looked "not so good" this week.

Who Else Played?

[Justin Pippen](#) played in both games. He didn't score in either game, going 0-for-1 and 0-for-2.

Who Didn't Play?

[Sam Walters](#) didn't play in either game this week. Apparently, he has a lower back injury, and is "day to day". He also missed a couple practices due to a death in his family.

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

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

What Does It Mean?

We've got a pennant race, and Michigan controls their own destiny. They have already beaten one of the contenders (Wisconsin), played (and split with) another one of the contenders (Purdue), and they still have two games to go against still another contender (Michigan State). They are in good position to be in the thick of the title race for the remainder of the season.

At this point, Michigan is a shoo-in for the NCAA Tournament, and they can help themselves with an even better seed, currently estimated at #4. They can also help themselves with a good seed in the Big Ten Tournament.

What's Next?

This week, Michigan only plays one game, and it's a big one. On Friday (02/21/2025, 8:00 p.m., Fox), they play (#11) Michigan State in Crisler Arena.

[Michigan State](#) is currently 20-5 (11-3 in Big Ten), with impressive wins over North Carolina, Illinois (twice), and Oregon, and unimpressive losses to Memphis, USC, UCLA, and Indiana. They have a couple noteworthy players (Jaden Akins and Xavier Booker), and a lot of height: a 6'10" guy, two 6'11" guys, and a 7-footer. This is THE game so far this season. MSU is very good, but they're not unbeatable. I expect another close, tense game that will be decided in the last seconds.

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

Go Blue!