

Nothing But 'Net – Week #01 – 10/13/2025 – Season Preview

Yeah, it's time for college basketball again. Basketball games start this week. Let's check out this season's team.

Here's my traditional standard description of this weekly column:

Yeah, it's time for University of Michigan men's basketball, and this is the place to read all about it: "Nothing But 'Net" on UMGoBlue.com. Check back every Monday morning between now and the end of the season for a quick, concise wrap-up of the previous week, and a look ahead at the upcoming week, all in one easy-to-read article.

As always here at UMGoBlue.com, the perspective is "by fans, for fans". I'm a fan (since 1974), and I go to all the home games, and watch/listen to all the away games. I don't have any special access (other than being an usher in Sections 209-210), I don't go to the press conferences, and I don't interview high school recruits. I see the same things you do, and write about them as a fan.

Once again, this will be a very unpredictable year, but that's true for most college sports these days. With the infamous Transfer Portal and open payment for "amateur" athletes, it's the Wild West out there. I'm not a fan of the Transfer Portal or NIL money, but they're a fact of life, and I just need to get used to it.

Executive Summary

The big question: how good is Michigan going to be this season?

The big answer: pretty darn good. Like, Final Four good. After just one season with Dusty May as the head coach, we've seen what he can do with the Transfer Portal and player development. Last season, he built up a very competitive team from scratch, and coached them to a very impressive record. I expect him to do more of the same this season.

What's New?

Last season, Michigan had a new coach and coaching staff, an almost entirely new roster, and there were four new teams in the Big Ten. There isn't that much change this season. This season, the biggest change is in the roster:

- Players Leaving:
 - 1 player entered the NBA Draft
 - 4 seniors/grad students graduated
 - 4 players transferred
- Players Arriving:
 - 5 incoming freshmen
 - 4 incoming transfer players

Player Who Entered The NBA Draft

Danny Wolf had a great season at Michigan last season, and no one was surprised when he entered the NBA Draft and was selected 27th overall in the 1st round by the Brooklyn Nets. Michigan only had him for one memorable season, and he will be missed a lot.

Graduating Seniors/Grad Students

Four players from last season "graduated":

- Ian Burns – Ian played at Michigan for four seasons, as a key member of the Scout Team. He only got into a handful of games (2, 3, 10, and 7) in his career, and he only scored a couple points. He was a nice guy, and a hard worker, but he won't be missed.

- Vladislav Goldin – Vlad only played for Michigan for one season, after playing for one season at Texas Tech and three seasons at Florida Atlantic. He used the COVID-19 waiver to play a 5th season, and he was a very valuable player on last season's team. He played in all 37 games, and started in all of them. He led the team in scoring, and was 2nd on the team in rebounds. He will very much be missed.
- Jace Howard – Jace played for Michigan for five seasons, thanks to the COVID-19 waiver. He had a real patchwork career at Michigan, with some good games and a lot of forgettable games. He was an important player in seasons when Michigan had a depleted roster, and he sat on the bench a lot when Michigan had better options. He also missed a lot of games with various injuries. He was a ferocious defender and a decent 3-point shooter, but he never really developed into a mainstream Big Ten player. He was a nice guy, and a hard worker, but he won't be missed.
- Rubin Jones – Rubin only played for Michigan for one season, after playing for four seasons at North Texas. He used the COVID-19 waiver to play a 5th season, and he was a valuable player on last season's team. He played in 33 games, and started in 12 of them. He averaged 3.6 points/game. He will be missed.

Players Who Transferred

Four players transferred to other schools after last season. They are:

- Phat Phat Brooks – Phat Phat was a freshman last season, and he played like it. He played in 15 games, and scored 12 points. He never looked comfortable out there. It was no big surprise when [he transferred to Central Michigan](#) for the 2025-2026 season. He may develop into a serviceable player at some point, but he won't be missed at Michigan.
- Tre Donaldson – Tre was one of the better players on last season's team, and it was sad when [he transferred to Miami \(FL\)](#) after just one season at Michigan. He'll have senior eligibility. Apparently, he was worried about competition from upcoming sophomore point guard L.J. Cason (see below) and incoming transfer point guard Elliot Cadeau (see below). He will be missed.
- Justin Pippen – Justin was a freshman last season, but he played pretty well. He played in 28 games, and scored 44 points. He seemed happy in Ann Arbor, so it was a surprise when [he transferred to Cal](#). He had lots of potential, and he will be missed.
- Sam Walters – Sam was a sophomore last season, and he was a key player for Michigan, so it was a sad surprise when [he transferred to SMU](#). He played pretty well in the first 23 games of the season, then he just disappeared. He missed at least one game due to a family funeral, then he missed the rest of the season with a mysterious back injury. He would have been a key player again this season, and he will be missed.

Incoming Freshmen

In this new age of building a roster from the Transfer Portal, it's refreshing when there is a solid class of incoming freshmen. Dusty May is doing both, hitting the Transfer Portal hard and bringing in a great freshman class. Here are the 5 incoming freshmen:

- [Oscar Goodman](#) #5 (6'7", 235 pounds, F) – Oscar is technically a redshirt freshman. He's been on the team since January 2025, practicing but not playing. He's from New Zealand, where he played international basketball. His stats from that experience look good, but we'll have to see how they translate to US college basketball.
- [Winters Grady](#) #10 (6'6", 210 pounds, G/F) – Winters is a 4-star wing, with a great outside shooting touch. As a freshman, he may not play that much, so he'll have to make the most of his opportunities.

- [Malick Kordel](#) #32 (7'2", 275 pounds, C) – Malick is another international player, from Germany. He hasn't been playing basketball for long (5 years), so he's something of a long-term project. Still, it really helps to be 7'2" in basketball. I'm hoping he's a quick learner.
- [Ricky Liburd](#) #0 (6'4", 190 pounds, G/F) – Ricky is a little short and a little light to be a true wing player, so think of him more as a tall guard. He's a 3-star player with a good outside shooting touch. Once again, he's a freshman on a team with a loaded roster, so we might not see much of him.
- [Trey McKenney](#) #1 (6'4", 225 pounds, G) – Trey is the crown jewel of this recruiting class. He is the reigning Mr. Basketball for the state of Michigan, a 5-star combo guard, a McDonald's All American, and the #18 recruit in his class. He's got great size, good speed, a great shooting touch, and tons of basketball IQ. He should play a lot this season, and he should do very well.

Incoming Transfer Players

With 9 players leaving the team (1 to the NBA, 4 to graduation, and 4 to the Transfer Portal), and only 5 incoming freshmen, Coach May had to work the Transfer Portal hard to fill out the roster. He was very successful, getting 4 players:

- [Elliot Cadeau](#) #3 (6'1", 180 pounds, G) – Elliot transferred to Michigan from North Carolina, where he played for two seasons, leaving him with two seasons of eligibility. He was very successful at UNC, and Michigan is fortunate to get him from the Transfer Portal. He's speedy, he's got a good shot, and he's got great court vision. He will undoubtedly be the starting point guard, and I expect him to flourish.
- [Morez Johnson Jr.](#) #21 (6'9", 250 pounds, F) – Morez transferred to Michigan from Illinois, where he played for one season, leaving him with three seasons of eligibility. He had a very good freshman season at Illinois, and Michigan is fortunate to get him from the Transfer Portal. He's going to see a lot of time at power forward.
- [Yaxel Lendeborg](#) #23 (6'9", 240 pounds, F) – Yaxel transferred to Michigan from UAB, where he played for two seasons, and before that, Arizona Western (a junior college), where he played for three seasons. So, this will be his 6th year of eligibility, thanks to the COVID-19 waiver and the rule saying that JUCO players get an extra year of eligibility. Whew! Yaxel was the highest rated player in the Transfer Portal, and he was seriously considering entering the NBA Draft instead of coming to Michigan. He was projected as a 1st round pick in the draft, but he chose to play his final year at Michigan. He will undoubtedly be the starting power forward, and I expect him to be a star this season.
- [Aday Mara](#) #15 (7'3", 255 pounds, C) – Aday transferred to Michigan from UCLA, where he played for two seasons, leaving him with two seasons of eligibility. He was good-but-not-great at UCLA, but he has plenty of potential. As far as I can tell, he is the tallest player ever to play for Michigan.

Who's Coming Back?

Along with all the subtractions and additions to the team listed above, there are actually 7 players returning from last season's team:

Sophomore Eligibility

- [L.J. Cason](#) #2 (6'2", 195 pounds, G) – L.J. played the best of the 3 freshman scholarship players last season. He played in 30 games, and scored 130 points. He didn't shoot particularly well: 42-for-114 (36.8%) overall, 15-for-61 (24.6%) from deep. He'll need to work on that. He is the backup point guard.

- [Howard Easley Jr.](#) #7 (6'0", 200 pounds, G) – Howard was on the Scout Team last season, and he didn't play much. He played in 3 games for 4 minutes, and he missed both of his shot attempts for the season. Note: He switched his jersey number from last season (5) to this season (7).

Junior Eligibility

- [Harrison Hochberg](#) #13 (6'7", 220 pounds, F) – Harrison was on the Scout Team last season, and he didn't play much. I expect more of the same this season.
- [Charlie May](#) #12 (6'5", 190 pounds, G) – Yes, Charlie is the son of head coach [Dusty May](#). He was on the Scout Team last season, and didn't play much. He played in 5 games for 6 minutes, and he didn't attempt a shot. I expect more of the same this season.

Senior Eligibility

- [Nimari Burnett](#) #4 (6'5", 195 pounds, G) – Nimari transferred to Michigan from Alabama two years ago, and decided to come back again for his senior season. He's been a quiet leader on the team.
- [Roddy Gayle Jr.](#) #11 (6'5", 210 pounds, G) – Roddy had a rough first season at Michigan for most of the season, then he came alive in the postseason. Let's hope he can keep it up.
- [Will Tschetter](#) #42 (6'8", 230 pounds, F) – Will is a true rarity on this team: he's played all 4 years at Michigan. He didn't transfer in, transfer out, or leave early for the NBA. He's a good, solid player with a nice outside shot, and a team leader.

Since the roster is scattered over several different sections above, here's the complete roster in one place, ordered by jersey number:

Name	Jersey #	Height	Weight	Position	Eligibility
Ricky Liburd	0	6'4"	190	G/F	Freshman
Trey McKenney	1	6'4"	225	G	Freshman
L.J. Cason	2	6'2"	195	G	Sophomore
Elliot Cadeau	3	6'1"	180	G	Junior
Nimari Burnett	4	6'5"	195	G	Senior
Oscar Goodman	5	6'7"	235	F	Freshman
Howard Easley Jr.	7	6'0"	200	G	Sophomore
Winters Grady	10	6'6"	210	G/F	Freshman
Roddy Gayle Jr.	11	6'5"	210	G	Senior
Charlie May	12	6'5"	190	G	Junior
Harrison Hochberg	13	6'7"	220	F	Junior
Aday Mara	15	7'3"	255	C	Junior
Morez Johnson Jr.	21	6'9"	250	F	Sophomore
Yaxel Lendeborg	23	6'9"	240	F	Grad. Student
Malick Kordel	32	7'2"	275	C	Freshman
Will Tschetter	42	6'8"	230	F	Senior

Starting Lineup/Depth Chart

This is really tricky this season, with all the new players. My guess:

Point guard: Cadeau (backups: Cason, Burnett, McKenney, and Gayle)
 Shooting guard: McKenney (backups: Burnett, Cason, and Liburd)
 Small forward: Lendeborg (backups: Johnson, Goodman, Grady, Tschetter, and Liburd)
 Power forward: Johnson (backups: Lendeborg, Tschetter, Goodman, and Grady)
 Center: Mara (backups: Kordel, Johnson, Tschetter, and Lendeborg)

This roster is stocked. There are enough quality players for two complete starting lineups.

Last Season

From last season's Wrap-Up article (lightly edited):

This season was a rousing success, far exceeding the expectations of most of the experts. With a new head coach and coaching staff, and a mostly new roster, no one knew quite what to expect. The previous season (2023-2024) was a miserable failure (8-24), and no one expected such a complete turnaround.

The two exhibition games gave us some idea of the firepower that Michigan had. [They beat Oakland 92-48](#) in Little Caesars Arena in Detroit, then [they beat Toledo 96-92](#) in Crisler Arena. [They beat Cleveland State 101-53](#) in Crisler Arena, then [they took their first loss, 72-70, against Wake Forest](#) in Greensboro, NC. This was the first of three very close losses in the non-conference portion of the schedule.

Next, they won three games in a row in Crisler Arena: [Texas Christian \(TCU\) 76-64](#), [Miami \(OH\) 94-67](#), and [Tarleton State 72-49](#). They played in the Fort Myers Tip-Off tournament over the Thanksgiving break, and they won it by beating [Virginia Tech \(75-63\)](#) and [\(#22\) Xavier \(78-53\)](#).

Michigan won their two early-December Big Ten games, which was a huge boost. In particular, they beat a very good [\(#11\) Wisconsin team on the road, 67-64](#). That was a huge win. They followed it up with an important [win over Iowa \(85-83\)](#) in Crisler Arena.

Now for the bad news: Michigan had two good chances to knock off quality opponents on neutral courts, and they lost both games, but just barely. They played in the Jimmy V Classic in Madison Square Garden against [Arkansas, and they lost 89-87](#). The next week, they played in the Jumpman Invitational in Charlotte, NC, against [\(#14\) Oklahoma, and they lost 87-86](#).

They had two more non-conference games against lesser opponents, both in Crisler Arena, and they won both of them easily: [89-58 against Purdue-Fort Wayne](#), and [112-64 against Western Kentucky](#).

So, Michigan entered 2025 with a non-conference record of 8-3, and a Big Ten record of 2-0. They started the main part of the Big Ten schedule on the road, far from home, in Los Angeles. This was the first time for Michigan to play USC and UCLA as conference games, and Michigan beat both of them! [They beat USC 85-74](#), then [they beat \(#22\) UCLA 94-75](#). These were two huge wins. USC finished tied for 12th place in the Big Ten, so that win doesn't look quite as impressive as it did at the time, but UCLA finished tied for 4th place, so that was a quality win. Michigan State won the Big Ten regular season championship with a 17-3 record, and two of those losses were in Los Angeles, playing USC and UCLA back-to-back.

Michigan returned home from their West Coast swing, and played yet another of the new Big Ten teams, [Washington, and they won handily, 91-75](#). Things were looking great: they were undefeated (5-0) in the Big Ten, tied for 1st place, and they were playing their best basketball of the season. A road game at last-place Minnesota? No problem, right? Wrong. This was Michigan's worst game of the season, and their only "bad loss". They didn't take Minnesota seriously, and they let them hang around. They went to overtime, and it looked like it was going to double overtime, but [Minnesota hit a half-court buzzer-beater, and beat Michigan 84-81](#). Ugh.

Back home again, facing lowly [Northwestern, and Michigan hung on for a close 80-76 win](#). Back on the road, at (#11) Purdue, where Michigan has had very little success over the years. This was other Michigan's "worst game of the season". Purdue came out of the gate on fire, and the game was essentially over by the second media timeout. Purdue was up 29-9 at the

11:18 mark, and Michigan never got close the rest of the game. [The final was 91-64, Purdue.](#) It was a bloodbath.

Last season, that would have been it for Michigan, losing 2 out of 3 games, the second one by 27 points. They would have gone through the motions for the rest of the season, and maybe snuck in one more win, but they would have been checked out. Not this season. Instead, they went on a 6-game winning streak, all by 4 points or less:

- [Home vs. Penn State, 76-72](#)
- [At Rutgers, 66-63](#)
- [Home vs. Oregon, 80-76](#)
- [At Indiana, 70-67](#)
- [Home vs. \(#7\) Purdue, 75-73](#)
- [At Ohio State, 86-83](#)

There are a couple noteworthy wins in there. Oregon had been in the Top 25 for most of the season, but they had just dropped out of the Top 25 when they came to Ann Arbor. By beating them, Michigan went 4-0 for the season against the four new West Coast additions to the Big Ten. It always tough for Michigan to win at Indiana and Ohio State, so those were both big rivalry wins. The biggest win of this stretch was beating Top-10 Purdue. It was a great victory.

So, time for the homestretch. At this point, Michigan was 12-2 in the Big Ten, all alone in 1st place, a half game ahead of (#14) Michigan State (12-3). MSU had recently lost the two games mentioned above in Los Angeles, won a game, then lost to Indiana. The battle for 1st place was in Crisler Arena, where Michigan was undefeated (12-0). Michigan controlled the 1st half, and led 38-34 at halftime. The 2nd half was a disaster, and [MSU won handily, 75-62.](#)

The loss to MSU seemed to shake Michigan's confidence, and they just weren't the same team for the rest of the regular season. They managed to squeak out [a truly ugly win at Nebraska, 49-46,](#) and [an almost-as-ugly win at home vs. Rutgers, 84-82,](#) but they struggled in both games. Look at the score of that Nebraska win: less than 100 points combined. Michigan played a terrible game, but they were just slightly less terrible than Nebraska. The home win vs. Rutgers was much closer than it should have been, and it took a miracle buzzer-beater to win it.

It all finally caught up with Michigan for the last three games of the regular season. Michigan was still in the thick of the Big Ten title race, and if they could win 2 of the last 3 games, they would probably tie for the Big Ten regular season championship. So, what did they do? They lost all three games, and they weren't particularly close. [They lost at home to Illinois on Senior Day \(not the last home game, for some reason\), 93-73,](#) [they lost at home to \(#13\) Maryland, 71-65,](#) and [they lost at \(#8\) Michigan State, 79-62.](#)

So, the regular season was over, and it ended with a whimper, not a bang, for Michigan. With those 3 losses, they finished tied with Maryland for 2nd place. Due to the tiebreaker, Michigan was the #3 seed in the Big Ten Tournament, and it sure looked like they weren't going to win more than one game in the tournament. Since they had one of the top 4 seeds, they didn't play until Friday, and they had to play (#20) Purdue. Yes, again. Fortunately, the rubber match went to Michigan, as [they beat Purdue easily, 86-68.](#) The semifinal game was on Saturday, against (#11) Maryland. Yes, the same Maryland team that beat them 10 days before in Crisler Arena. This was a close, exciting game, and Maryland up 80-79 with 5 seconds left. Fortunately, Michigan had the ball, and [Tre Donaldson](#) went the length of the floor for the game-winning layup with 0.4 seconds left. [Michigan beat Maryland, 81-80.](#) It was very exciting. The final game was on Sunday against (#18) Wisconsin, and it was also close and exciting. It was all tied up (53-53) with 1:34 left, and Michigan scored the last 6 points [to beat Wisconsin 59-53,](#) and win the Big Ten Tournament Championship.

On to the NCAA Tournament. Michigan was given a worse seed than they deserved (a 5-seed), but they managed to make it to the Sweet Sixteen anyway. They played in the South

Region of the tournament, and played their first two games in Denver. [They beat \(12-seed\) UC San Diego 68-65](#), then [they beat \(4-seed\) \(#19\) Texas A&M 91-79](#). It was a big deal that Michigan made it to the Sweet Sixteen, and they went to Atlanta with hopes of an upset over the 1-seed (#4) Auburn. Nope. They played well for the first 28 minutes, and they had built a decent lead, 48-39, with 12:26 to go. Then the roof fell in. In the next 5 minutes, they gave up a 20-2 run, and that was it. [Auburn held them off the rest of the way, and won 78-65](#). Season over. Those 5 minutes cost them any chance of a magical ending. It was a shame.

Still, it was a fun, successful season, much better than expected. Michigan only had one "bad loss" (at Minnesota), a couple expected losses (at Purdue and at MSU), a few losses in "toss up" games on neutral courts (Wake Forest, Arkansas, and Oklahoma), and a few losses in "toss up" games at home (MSU, Illinois, and Maryland). They had some great wins: the Fort Myers Tip-Off tournament, at Wisconsin, at USC, at UCLA, at Indiana, home vs. Purdue, at Ohio State, all 3 games in the Big Ten Tournament, and both wins in the NCAA Tournament. Out of all those wins, the win at UCLA stands out. That was the high point of the season. Beating UCLA in Pauley Pavilion by 19 points is huge.

This Season

Let's look at Michigan's schedule for this season.

Date	Opponent	Location	Time (ET)
10/17/2025 (Fri)	Cincinnati (exhibition)	Ann Arbor, MI	6:00 p.m.
10/25/2025 (Sat)	St. John's (exhibition)	New York, NY	7:00 p.m.
11/03/2025 (Mon)	Oakland	Ann Arbor, MI	8:30 p.m.
Wolverine-Deacon Challenge			
11/11/2025 (Tue)	Wake Forest	Detroit, MI	6:30 p.m.
11/14/2025 (Fri)	TCU	Fort Worth, TX	TBA
11/19/2025 (Wed)	Middle Tennessee	Ann Arbor, MI	6:30 p.m.
Players Era Championship			
11/24/2025 (Mon)	San Diego State	Las Vegas, NV	10:30 p.m.
11/25/2025 (Tue)	Auburn	Las Vegas, NV	8:30 p.m.
11/26/2025 (Wed)	TBD (Champion Bracket)	Las Vegas, NV	TBA
11/27/2025 (Thu)	TBD (Consolation Bracket)	Las Vegas, NV	TBA
12/06/2025 (Sat)	Rutgers	Ann Arbor, MI	4:00 p.m.
12/09/2025 (Tue)	Villanova	Ann Arbor, MI	6:30 p.m.
12/13/2025 (Sat)	Maryland	College Park, MD	8:00 p.m.
12/21/2026 (Sun)	La Salle	Ann Arbor, MI	4:00 p.m.
12/29/2026 (Mon)	McNeese	Ann Arbor, MI	7:00 p.m.
01/02/2026 (Fri)	USC	Ann Arbor, MI	7:00 p.m.
01/06/2026 (Tue)	Penn State	State College, PA	7:00 p.m.
01/10/2026 (Sat)	Wisconsin	Ann Arbor, MI	1:00/2:00 p.m.
01/14/2026 (Wed)	Washington	Seattle, WA	10:30 p.m.
01/17/2026 (Sat)	Oregon	Eugene, OR	4:00 p.m.
01/20/2026 (Tue)	Indiana	Ann Arbor, MI	7:00 p.m.
01/23/2026 (Fri)	Ohio State	Ann Arbor, MI	8:00 p.m.
01/27/2026 (Tue)	Nebraska	Ann Arbor, MI	7:00 p.m.
01/30/2026 (Fri)	Michigan State	East Lansing, MI	8:00 p.m.
02/05/2026 (Thu)	Penn State	Ann Arbor, MI	6:30 p.m.
02/08/2026 (Sun)	Ohio State	Columbus, OH	1:00 p.m.
02/11/2026 (Wed)	Northwestern	Evanston, IL	8:30 p.m.
02/14/2026 (Sat)	UCLA	Ann Arbor, MI	1:00 p.m.
02/17/2026 (Tue)	Purdue	West Lafayette, IN	6:30 p.m.
Duel In The District			
02/21/2026 (Sat)	Duke	Washington, DC	6:30 p.m.
02/24/2026 (Tue)	Minnesota	Ann Arbor, MI	8:30 p.m.

02/27/2026 (Fri)	Illinois	Champaign-Urbana, IL	8:00 p.m.
03/05/2026 (Thu)	Iowa	Iowa City, IA	8:00 p.m.
03/08/2026 (Sun)	Michigan State	Ann Arbor, MI	4:30 p.m.
Big Ten Tournament			
03/10/2026 (Tue)	1 st Round	Chicago, IL	TBA
03/11/2026 (Wed)	2 nd Round	Chicago, IL	TBA
03/12/2026 (Thu)	3 rd Round	Chicago, IL	TBA
03/13/2026 (Fri)	Quarterfinals	Chicago, IL	TBA
03/14/2026 (Sat)	Semifinals	Chicago, IL	TBA
03/15/2026 (Sun)	Championship	Chicago, IL	TBA

Some comments on the schedule:

- The exhibition schedule is unusual. Usually, it's one game against an overmatched GLIAC team in Ann Arbor. This season it's two games, one at home and one on a neutral court, against two solid opponents (Cincinnati and St. John's). Both of these games are "toss up" games.
- Just like last season, this is a much tougher non-conference schedule than usual, with several big-name opponents: Wake Forest, TCU, San Diego State, Auburn, Players Era Champion/Consolation team, Villanova, and Duke. Michigan will be doing well to go 4-3 in these games.
- The other non-conference games (Oakland, Middle Tennessee, La Salle, and McNeese) all look winnable.
- Just like last season, Michigan is flying out to the West Coast in January for back-to-back games against two of the new Big Ten teams: Washington and Oregon. I'm impressed that the Big Ten scheduled these two games together, so Michigan can fly out once and play both games. The other two West Coast teams (USC and UCLA) are both coming to Ann Arbor this season, after Michigan beat them on the road last season.
- Each Big Ten team plays 14 teams once (7 home/7 away) and 3 teams twice, for a total of 20 games. This season, Michigan plays:
 - Once (home): Rutgers, USC, Wisconsin, Indiana, Nebraska, UCLA, and Minnesota.
 - Once (away): Maryland, Washington, Oregon, Northwestern, Purdue, Illinois, and Iowa.
 - Twice: Michigan State, Ohio State, and Penn State. (All the State teams)
- Given the preseason predictions, Michigan should be happy about:
 - Playing Wisconsin, Indiana, and UCLA at home.
 - Playing Penn State twice.
- Given the preseason predictions, Michigan should be unhappy about:
 - Playing Michigan State twice.
 - Playing away games vs. Oregon, Purdue, and Illinois.

Expectations

Normally, I like to divide the games up into 3 categories ("Should Win", "Should Lose", and "Toss Up"), but with all the roster changes, I have no idea any more. Looking at the schedule, I hope that Michigan wins all 4 of their "less challenging" non-conference games, goes 4-3 in their "more challenging" non-conference games, and goes 14-6 in the Big Ten. That would work out to a final regular season record of 22-9, which would be enough to get them a good seed in the NCAA Tournament. I think the ceiling for this team is 26-5, and the floor is 18-13.

This Week

This week, Michigan only plays one game. On Friday (10/17/2025, 6:00 p.m., BTN+) they play Cincinnati in Crisler Arena. This is an exhibition game.

[Cincinnati](#) was 19-16 (7-13 in the Big 12) last season. They lost in the 2nd round of the Big 12 Tournament, and they weren't invited to the NCAA Tournament. Instead, they played in the

College Basketball Crown Tournament, where they went 1-1. They don't have any noteworthy players, but they do have some height: a 6'10" guy, a 6'11" guy, and a 7'2" guy. This could be a very challenging exhibition game, and it will tell us a lot about what kind of team Michigan has this season.

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

Go Blue!