

Nothing But 'Net – Week #12 – 12/29/2025 – Christmas Break, And Midterm Grades

The (#2) University of Michigan men's basketball team didn't have any games this past week. It was Christmas break. Michigan's record remains at 11-0 (2-0 in Big Ten).

What Happened?

Michigan had the week off, as a Christmas break. Other than the three-games-in-three-days thing at the Players Era Festival during Thanksgiving week, Michigan has had their games very nicely spaced. That's about to change. Once the main portion of the Big Ten schedule starts up in the new year, the games come fast and furiously. Fortunately, Michigan is going into the new year in good shape: well rested, injury free, and undefeated. Of course, they have one more non-conference game left to play, but we'll get to that in a minute.

Midterm Grades

The regular season is 31 games long, and Michigan has played 11 games so far, so the season isn't exactly at the midpoint yet, but now is a good time for (early) midterm grades.

Freshman Eligibility

- [Oscar Goodman](#) (C+) – Oscar has only played a little (8 games, 55 minutes), but it's enough to get him a grade instead of "Inc.". He's scored 11 points on decent shooting: 5/12 (41.7%) overall, 0/3 from deep. He's had his chances out there, and he hasn't done much with them. He has had two nice dunks, but he hasn't shown much of an outside touch.
- [Winters Grady](#) (C) – Winters has only played a little (7 games, 45 minutes), but it's enough to get him a grade instead of "Inc.". He's scored 20 points on mediocre shooting: 6/17 (35.3%) overall, all from deep. All his shot attempts have been from 3-point range. At this point, he's "Just A Shooter", with no rebounding or defense.
- [Malick Kordel](#) (C) – Malick has only played a little (8 games, 42 minutes), but it's enough to get him a grade instead of "Inc.". He's scored 7 points on mediocre shooting: 3/8 (37.5%) overall, 0/1 from deep. He's tall, and he's strong, but he doesn't have a lot of basketball IQ. When he's in there, he gets some rebounds and makes some dunks, but that's about it.
- [Ricky Liburd](#) (Inc.) – Ricky isn't playing this season. He is being medically redshirted.
- [Trey McKenney](#) (B) – Trey has played in every game so far, but all off the bench. He has scored 117 points, on pretty good shooting: 36/79 (45.6%) overall, 23/57 (40.4%) from deep. He's had some good games (Oakland: 21 points, TCU: 11 points, Auburn: 11 points, Gonzaga: 17 points, Rutgers: 13 points, Villanova: 10 points, and La Salle: 17 points) and some forgettable games (MTSU: 3 points, SDSU: 6 points, and Maryland: 0 points). He's a freshman, so we have to cut him some slack, but he has a tendency to be a little "trigger happy" when he gets in.

Sophomore Eligibility

- [L.J. Cason](#) (B-) – L.J. has played in 10 of the 11 games so far, but all off the bench. He has scored 83 points, on good shooting: 31/58 (53.4%) overall, 12/29 (41.4%) from deep. He's had some good games (Auburn: 10 points, Rutgers: 11 points, Maryland: 12 points, and La Salle: 13 points) and some forgettable games (TCU: 5 points, SDSU: 6 points, and Gonzaga: 2 points). His scoring is secondary to his contributions as a "pass first" point guard, although he doesn't have many assists (24) to show for it.
- [Howard Eisley Jr.](#) (Inc.) – Howard is on the Scout Team, and he hasn't played much: 3 games, 5 minutes, 1/2 shooting (all 3-point shots).

- [Morez Johnson Jr.](#) (B+) – Morez has been an important contributor to Michigan's early success. He's been the starting power forward for every game, and he's played well. He's strong around the basket, and he's a capable backup at center, despite being "only" 6'10". He's averaging 12.6 points/game on good shooting: 57/86 (66.3%) overall, 2/6 (33.3%) from deep.

Junior Eligibility

- [Elliot Cadeau](#) (A-) – Elliot has been the starting point guard all season, and he's played well. He's had a few games with low points, low assists, or high turnovers, but for the most part he's been running the offense well and scoring pretty well. He's averaging 10.1 points/game on good shooting: 39/86 (45.3%) overall, 20/46 (43.5%) from deep. His free throw shooting has been surprisingly poor: 13/21 (61.9%). He leads the team in assists, with 64.
- [Harrison Hochberg](#) (Inc.) – Harrison is on the Scout Team, and he hasn't played yet this season.
- [Aday Mara](#) (A-) – Aday has been the starting center for 10 of the 11 games, and he's played well. He's averaging 10.7 points/game on good shooting: 50/75 (66.7%) overall, 0/4 from deep. Obviously, he doesn't have much of a touch from 3-point range. He also isn't very good at free throws: 18/40 (45.0%). He's the leading rebounder on the team, with 93, and the leading shot blocker, with 29.
- [Charlie May](#) (Inc.) – Charlie is on the Scout Team, and he hasn't played much: 4 games, 13 minutes, 4 points.

Senior/Grad Student Eligibility

- [Nimari Burnett](#) (B) – Nimari has been a little disappointing so far this season. He's averaging 8.4 points/game on pretty good shooting: 30/64 (46.9%) overall, 15/37 (40.5%) from deep. He's had some good games (Oakland: 14 points, SDSU: 11 points, Auburn: 15 points, and Gonzaga: 14 points) and some forgettable games (Wake Forest: 2 points, MTSU: 5 points, Rutgers: 5 points, Villanova: 5 points, and La Salle: 4 points). He needs to be more consistent in his offensive output.
- [Roddy Gayle Jr.](#) (B+) – Roddy has been a great "6th man" this season. He's played in every game, all but one off the bench. He's averaging 10.4 points/game on good shooting: 41/76 (53.9%) overall, 7/21 (33.3%) from deep. His most valuable contribution has been his consistency: he has scored at least 9 points in almost every game (MTSU: 8 points, and La Salle: 6 points), with 6 games in double figures. He's also a fierce rebounder who plays like a much taller player.
- [Yaxel Lendeborg](#) (A) – Yaxel is the undisputed star on this team, and the only player to get an "A" for his midterm grade. He can do it all. He's the leading scorer (15.6 points/game), the 2nd leading rebounder (78), and 2nd on the team in assists (42). He's shooting well: 57/96 (59.4%) overall, 20/50 (40.0%) from deep. He's hit double figures in all but 3 games (Wake Forest: 9 points, Villanova: 9 points, and La Salle: 8 points), and he's been the leading scorer in most games. He was even the MVP of the Players Era Festival.
- [Will Tschetter](#) (C+) – Will has been another good "6th man" on this team, but he hasn't been quite as consistent as he was the last couple seasons. He's averaging 5.3 points/game on decent shooting: 16/40 (40.0%) overall, 12/31 (38.7%) from deep. He's had more scoreless games (3: Wake Forest, TCU, and Rutgers) than double figure games (2: Oakland [16 points] and SDSU [10 points]).

This Week

This week, Michigan plays two games. On Monday (12/29/2025, 7:00 p.m., BTN+), they play McNeese, then on Friday (01/02/2026, 7:00 p.m., Peacock), they play (#24) USC. Both games are in Crisler Arena.

[McNeese](#) is currently 10-2 (3-1 in the Southland Conference), with no impressive wins, and unimpressive losses to Santa Clara and Incarnate Word. They don't have any noteworthy players, but they do have some height: three 6'10" players. This is a team that Michigan should beat soundly, but they have to be careful: it was only two years ago to the day (12/29/2023) that McNeese came into Crisler and beat Michigan 87-76. That was embarrassing. Of course, that Michigan team was the infamous 8-24 team that got Juwan Howard fired, but still...

[USC](#) is currently 12-1 (1-1 in the Big Ten), with impressive wins over Arizona State and Oregon, and an unimpressive loss to Washington. They have a couple noteworthy players: Aljiah Arenas, son of NBA great Gilbert Arenas, and our old buddy, Terrance Williams II. Yes, Terrance is still playing. He was injured for a lot of last season, including the Michigan game, so between a medical redshirt and the COVID-year waiver, he's still around. He started his college career at Michigan in fall 2020 and played for 4 years in Ann Arbor. He's started 9 of USC's 13 games this season, and he's averaging 3.2 points/game. Of course, he'll be gunning to beat his old team. It should be interesting. USC has height to match Michigan: two 6'10" players and a 7'5" player. Yes, someone even taller than Mara. He doesn't start, he only plays 9.2 minutes/game, and he's only averaging 3.3 points/game, but he's still 7'5" tall. This is a game that Michigan should win, but it could be challenging.

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

Go Blue!