

Nothing But 'Net - Week #25 - 03/30/2026 - Final Four Bound!

I'm away from my desktop and laptop, using my iPad, so this report will be shorter and less detailed this week. Sorry.

The University of Michigan men's basketball team played two games this past week as the #1 seed in the Midwest Region of the NCAA Tournament in Chicago, and they won both of them. [On Friday \(03/27/2026\), they beat \(#4 seed\) Alabama 90-77](#) in the Sweet Sixteen, then [on Sunday \(03/29/2026\), they beat \(#6 seed\) Tennessee 95-62](#) in the Elite Eight. Michigan's record is now 35-3.

What Happened?

Michigan is going to the Final Four! They dominated both opponents this week, especially Tennessee, and their reward is a trip to Indianapolis.

They were behind early in both games, but they kept their composure and eventually got both games under control.

Game Flow

Alabama jumped out to an early lead, up 11-2 at the 16:16 mark. Michigan fought back, and tied it up (11-11) with 14:20 to go. The lead went back and forth for the next few minutes, and it was still tied (22-22) at the 9:59 mark. Alabama built up a small lead (28-22) with 8:38 left, but Michigan hung with them, and never let them get too far ahead. UM finally caught them and went ahead, 40-38, with 3:18 to go. The lead went back and forth again for a minute, then Michigan built up a 6-point lead (47-41) at the 1:58 mark. As they have done so many times this season, Michigan played miserably for the last 2 minutes of the half, letting Alabama go on an 8-0 run to lead at halftime, 49-47. Sigh. If Michigan loses a game in the Big Dance, it's probably going to be because of this tendency.

Fortunately, Michigan started the 2nd half with a 13-2 run, giving them a 60-51 lead at the 15:34 mark. They never trailed again. Alabama got as close as 5 points (62-57) with 14:33 to go, but Michigan pushed the lead up to 10 points (67-57) at the 13:23 mark, and that was it for Alabama; they never got closer than 8 points the rest of the way. Michigan pushed the lead as high as 16 points, winning by 13. It was a glorious victory.

The Tennessee game was back-and-forth early, with UT up 16-14 at the 11:22 mark. That's when the game got away from them. Michigan went on a devastating 21-0 run over the next 5 minutes, to go up 19 points (35-16) with 6:10 to go. That was it for Tennessee; they never got closer than 15 points the rest of the game. Michigan pushed their lead up to 20 points (38-18) at the 4:40 mark, and led by 22 points (48-26) at halftime. They kept it going in the 2nd half, going up by 30 points (64-34) at the 14:02 mark, and getting the lead as high as 34 points. [Coach May](#) put in the Scout Team, and Michigan still won by 33 points. It was a good, old-fashioned butt kicking.

Stats

[The stats for the Alabama game](#) were very good:

Overall shooting - 33/66 = 50.0% (Good)
3-point shooting - 13/27 = 48.1% (Great)
Free throws - 11/20 = 55.0% (Lousy)
Rebounds - Michigan won 46-32
Turnovers - Michigan lost 8-7

[The stats for the Tennessee game](#) were pretty good:

Overall shooting - 29/56 = 51.8% (Very good)
3-point shooting - 10/27 = 37.0% (Good)
Free throws - 27/37 = 73.0% (Good)

Rebounds - Tied 42-42
Turnovers - Michigan lost 11-9

Who Started?

The starters for both games were [Nimari Burnett](#), [Elliot Cadeau](#), [Morez Johnson Jr.](#), [Yaxel Lendeborg](#), and [Aday Mara](#).

Who Looked Good?

Lendeborg was the star in both games, with 23 and 27 points. He also had 12 rebounds and 7 assists in the Alabama game, for another double-double. He was in the zone in both games.

[Trey McKenney](#) was the only other Michigan player to hit double figures in both games, with 17 and 12 points off the bench. He is a fantastic 6th man.

Johnson had one good game (12 points vs. Tennessee) and one decent game (7 points vs. Alabama).

Mara had one good game (11 points vs. Tennessee) and one decent game (8 points vs. Alabama).

Burnett had one good game (10 points vs. Tennessee) and one lousy game (2 points vs. Alabama). It's a shame he had such a quiet game against Alabama, since that's where he transferred to Michigan from.

Cadeau had one very good game (17 points vs. Alabama) and one decent game (8 points vs. Tennessee).

[Roddy Gayle Jr.](#) had one good game (16 points vs. Alabama) and one decent game (8 points vs. Tennessee) off the bench.

Who Looked Not-So-Good?

[Will Tschetter](#) had another quiet week off the bench, with 0 and 2 points.

Who Else Played?

Since the Tennessee game was a blowout, a few of the non-mainstream players got to play.

[Howard Easley Jr.](#) chucked up a couple 3-point attempts. They both missed.

[Oscar Goodman](#) hit his only shot, a 2-pointer.

[Charlie May](#) hit his only shot, a 3-pointer. It was very exciting. As the Facebook guy for UMGoBlue.com pointed out, Charlie has more points in Elite Eight games (3) than Jeremy Fears Jr. of Michigan State (2).

Who Didn't Play?

[Malick Kordel](#) was the only able-bodied scholarship player who didn't get to play this week. [L.J. Cason](#) and [Winters Grady](#) are both out with injuries.

[Harrison Hochberg](#) was the only Scout Team player who didn't get to play this week.

What Does It Mean?

This is a Really Big Deal. Michigan has had a great season, and they're a #1 seed, but they still had to actually play and win the games to get to the Final Four. They did, and they looked great doing it.

On to the Final Four!

This Week

This week Michigan plays one game in the Final Four of the NCAA Tournament in Indianapolis as a #1 seed. On Saturday (04/04/2026, 8:39 p.m., TBS), they play (#1 seed) Arizona. If they win that game, they'll play again on Monday (04/06/2026, 8:50 p.m., TBS) against the winner of the (#2 seed) Connecticut vs. (#3 seed) Illinois game for the National Championship, but that game is next week in my schedule of Monday - Sunday.

[Arizona](#) is currently 36-2, with impressive wins over (#3) Florida, (#15) UCLA, (#3) Connecticut, (#20) Auburn, (#12) Alabama, (#13) BYU, (#23) BYU, (#2) Houston, (#14) Kansas, (#6) Iowa State, (#7) Iowa State, (#5) Houston, (#14) Arkansas, and (#8) Purdue. Both their losses were to ranked teams: (#9) Kansas and (#16) Texas Tech. They played a tough schedule, and they won most of them. They don't have any noteworthy players, but they do have some height: two 6'11" players and one 7'2" player. This will be a very challenging game, which is exactly what you would expect against the #2 team in the country, in the national semifinal game. Michigan can certainly beat Arizona, but they'll have to keep playing at the level they've been playing in the tournament.

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

Go Blue!

P.S. I'm sorry this article is late this week, but I have an excuse: I'm finishing writing it on my iPad on an Air France flight from Paris to Detroit. My wife and I are returning today from 18 days in Spain and Portugal. We had a great time, but it was hard to follow the Wolverines from Spain and Portugal, especially with the 5-6 hour time difference. I followed the Big Ten Tournament games using the ESPN app to monitor the scores while we were out sightseeing in Madrid. I followed the score of the Howard game using the ESPN app while watching a performance by Fado singers in Lisbon, Portugal. I only saw the halftime and final scores for the Saint Louis game, since we were watching an excellent Flamenco dance performance in Seville that evening. I got to watch the whole Alabama game using the Xfinity stream app from my hotel room in Barcelona, but the game was on from 1:00 a.m. to 3:15 a.m. local time (CET). Finally, I got to watch most of the Tennessee game using the Xfinity app from my hotel room in Barcelona, but the wonky WiFi kept buffering the feed. I wrote part of this article on the bus ride back to Barcelona from Andorra, part of it in my hotel room in Barcelona, part of it on the Air France flight from Barcelona to Paris, and the rest of it on the Air France flight from Paris to Detroit. Phew!

I'll be home with my big computer to write this week's article.