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“We’re still playing, we’re excited about that and we’re trying to say that we’re in (the NIT) to win it.” –Tommy Amaker, after the win over UTEP

Michigan fans, welcome back to Crisler Arena! Tonight, the Wolverines continue their march to the Big Apple with a second-round NIT contest versus the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame. Last Thursday, seniors Chris Hunter and Daniel Horton led U-M to an impressive 82-67 victory over the UTEP Miners to keep the season alive. Hunter scored a season-high 20 points, while Horton added 14 points and 9 assists. Meanwhile, Notre Dame disposed of Vanderbilt, setting up their third matchup with Michigan in the last 15 months. The Irish will be fired up tonight, looking to avenge two close losses to the Maize and Blue; last year, Air Georgia’s last-second block of Chris Thomas secured a 61-60 U-M win in Ann Arbor, and earlier this year, Dion Harris’ late baseline jumper helped Michigan grab a 71-67 victory in South Bend. Bring the noise tonight folks – help the team continue this series dominance!

Here is the projected starting lineup for the Notre Dame Fighting Irish (16-13, 6-10 Big East):

2	Chris Quinn	6’2”	G	The second most notable Quinn on campus behind high school classmate Brady (no relation) is a regular fixture at Irish volleyball matches
15	Colin Falls	6’5”	G	Stanford Hall’s top sharpshooter managed just three points against NC State on 1-for-8 shooting from beyond the arc
43	Russell Carter	6’4”	G	Playing basketball for the Irish was a second choice behind his childhood dream of playing across the street in Notre Dame Stadium
31	Rob Kurz	6’9”	F	Failed to control himself following ND’s football victory over Michigan in 2004, resulting in a fight and a broken jaw
34	Torin Francis	6’11”	F	Couldn’t cut it at an ’05 Draft camp, causing a personal “Return to Glory”; spelled his high school, Tabor Academy, wrong (Tabir) on his ND website
Coach	Mike Brey			The second-best former Duke assistant-turned-head coach in Crisler today

Daaaaaaaddy!!!: Freshman forward Ryan Ayers (#42) is the son of former Ohio State head coach Randy Ayers.

Dru Warier: Senior forward Rick Cornett (#11) is also referred to with the nickname “Dru.”

The new Rudy: Junior guard Kieran Piller (#35) was added to the Notre Dame roster as a walk-on just before the start of the season.

Enigmatic ballhog: Freshman guard Kyle McAlarney (#23) once scored 50 points in a 69-64 high school game that went to overtime. The only problem? His team lost. Maybe shooting the ball every time you touch it doesn’t work after all. However, this is the same guy who failed to score in an all-star game in which 345 total points were scored and 21 players scored in double digits.

Mr. Big Shot: Luke Zeller (#40) reached national prominence as a high school senior when he sank a half-court shot at the buzzer to win the Indiana state championship for Washington High School.

THE REST OF THE NOTRE DAME ROSTER: #33 Zach Hillesland, #24 Chris Murphy

Thanks, seniors: On this, the third edition (and counting) of Senior Night, be sure to show Daniel Horton, Lester Abram, Chris Hunter, Graham Brown, Sherrod Harrell, Hayes Grooms, Troy Sanchez, and Amadou Ba the appreciation they deserve tonight!

H-BOMB: If Daniel Horton hits a three, drop back in your seats as if a bomb has violently shaken Crisler Arena. It’s the H-BOMB!

Potential upcoming NIT home games:

Wednesday, March 22 vs. Creighton/Miami(FL) winner **if Michigan beats Notre Dame tonight

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STUDENTS! E-MAIL LIST: To sign up for weekly newsletters and important Rage tidbits, go to MaizeRage.org and click the link on the left side of the page, or send an email to tsuchii@umich.edu requesting that your name be added.

Histo’s Corner: Michigan is 14-7 all-time against Notre Dame, and has won 11 of the last 13 games against the Fighting Irish, including a 67-66 NIT victory over the Irish in South Bend exactly nine years ago (3/20/97). Tommy Amaker is 4-0 all-time in games coached against Notre Dame head coach Mike Brey.

Michigan is 4-0 this year in games with one-sided issues of the Full Court Press.

HISTO’S “BY THE NUMBERS”:

1,000: Michigan’s all-time winning percentage in Postseason NIT home games at Crisler (13-0). U-M has won three NIT championships (1984, 1997, and 2004).