

Buckeyes Third In Conference Standings Heading Into Final Week



Heading into the final week of the regular season of women's college basketball, things are set up for an exciting finish in the Big Ten.

Michigan currently leads in the standings, holding a 12-3 record in conference play (21-4 overall), followed by Indiana (19-5, 11-3), Ohio State (20-5, 12-4), Maryland (20-7, 12-4) and Iowa (17-7, 11-4). Assuming no cancellations in this final week, Indiana will play 16 conference games, Michigan and Maryland will finish with 17, and Iowa and Ohio State will each have played 18.

The Big Ten does not use tiebreakers for the regular-season championship and will determine standings by winning percentage for teams that have played an unequal number of conference games. However, if two teams with an equal number of games finished tied atop the standings, they would be declared co-champions.

This means that the Wolverines are one of two teams that controls their own destiny, with games remaining against Michigan State and Iowa. It would be the first regular-season title in school history for Michigan.

The other school that controls its own destiny is Iowa, which closes against Indiana, Rutgers and Michigan. Though it is a tough finish to the season, the Hawkeyes would either win sole possession of the Big Ten with an Ohio State loss or become co-champions with the Buckeyes in the event that both teams win out.

If Indiana wins out against Iowa and Maryland, it would need Michigan to drop one game to surpass it in winning percentage. Ohio State, meanwhile, needs to win out and see Indiana and Michigan drop at least one game. The Buckeyes could stay alive with a loss to Penn State or Michigan State in its final two games, but they would then require both Michigan and Indiana to lose out, which seems unlikely.

With just one game remaining against Indiana, Maryland is likely out of the title race unless Michigan and Ohio State were to each drop a game - even then, if Iowa were to win out against Indiana, Rutgers and Michigan, the Hawkeyes would become an improbable champion based off the standings just a week or two ago. The Terps would also become co-champions if they and Michigan both win out while Ohio State drops a game.

Ohio State will play next on Thursday, hosting Penn State, before hitting the road to play Michigan State in its regular-season finale.

Team	Feb. 21	Feb. 24	Feb. 25	Feb. 27
Michigan		vs. Michigan State		@ Iowa
Indiana	@ Iowa		@ Maryland	
Ohio State		vs. Penn State		@ Michigan State
Maryland			vs. Indiana	
Iowa		Indiana @ Rutgers		Michigan