



## **Big Ten Tournament: Ohio State Falls To Michigan State Despite Late Surge**

The Ohio State men's basketball team still has a shot at the NCAA Tournament, but it won't get an automatic bid.

Head coach Chris Holtmann's squad fell to Michigan State, 77-70, Friday afternoon at the United Center in Chicago in the third round of the Big Ten tournament.

The eighth-seeded Buckeyes (19-14) opened the second half on a 10-2 run to take a 40-38 lead, but sophomore center Kaleb Wesson, their leading scorer, fouled out with almost 10 minutes to play and No. 1 seed Michigan State (26-6) went ahead by as many as 21 before holding off a late surge from OSU after the Buckeyes pulled within five with less than 10 seconds to play.

The Spartans face either No. 13 seed Nebraska or fourth-seeded Wisconsin at 1 p.m. Saturday in the tournament semifinals. The Cornhuskers and Badgers were set to play 25 minutes after the Buckeyes and Spartans faced off.

Michigan State's Cassius Winston led all players with 18 points, including a perfect 9-for-9 mark at the free-throw line. The Buckeyes were led by 16 points from fifth-year senior guard Keyshawn Woods, while junior forward Andre Wesson added 14 points.

Ohio State struck first by way of a layup from Kaleb Wesson less than two minutes into the game, eventually taking a four-point lead at 10-6 on a Keyshawn Woods jumper with 14:13 on the clock.

The Buckeyes led by four on two other occasions in the first half, but never more than that as Michigan State kept things tight before taking control of the opening frame. The Spartans took their first half lead for good at 26-25 on a three-pointer from Foster Loyer, his third of the half. A Winston jumper eventually gave them a 36-30 lead at the break, thanks in part to a 63.6 shooting percentage (14 of 22) in the opening 20 minutes.

Ohio State turned things around early in the second half, going on that 10-2 run capped by back-to-back three pointers from Andre and Kaleb Wesson to make it 40-38 with 16:51 remaining.

The Spartans quickly regained control after the run. Matt McQuaid connected on two free throws

before he fouled Kaleb Wesson under the basket, but the Buckeye big man was simultaneously whistled for a flagrant 1. McQuaid connected on two more free throws before Loyer made his fourth three in a row to make it 45-40 with 16:11 on the clock.

That lead grew to eight by the under-12 timeout, at which point Kaleb Wesson was sitting with four fouls and Andre Wesson, who was second on the team with 11 points at the time, went to the locker room with what appeared to be a lower-body injury. Michigan State took the first double digit lead of the game about a minute later. The Buckeyes called a timeout to sub the Wesson brothers back in, but Kaleb was called for his fifth just 15 seconds later, putting him on the sidelines for the rest of the game.

With Ohio State's leading scorer fouled out, the Michigan State lead grew to 21 by the 4:12 mark as the Spartans seemingly took complete control. The Buckeyes had one last burst to get back in the game, though, going on a 16-0 run to pull within five. The burst was started by a Woods jumper and included three-pointers from Andre Wesson and freshman guard Luther Muhammad.

After freshman guard Duane Washington converted a layup with nine seconds left, the Spartans iced the game at the free-throw line.

The Buckeyes shot 24 of 52 (46.2 percent) from the field in the loss, with half of their makes and attempts coming from beyond the three-point arc. The Spartans were 26 of 50 (52.0) overall and 7 of 17 (41.2) from deep.

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