

Men's hockey recaps: No. 7 Buckeyes split tight series at No. 5 Notre Dame



It's a good sign for Ohio State that getting a split at No. 5 Notre Dame is not good enough.

The seventh-ranked Buckeyes, exactly one week after getting blown out at home 8-2 by Bowling Green, opened Big Ten play with a 1-0 road victory Nov. 2 but couldn't get the sweep when the Fighting Irish claimed a 2-1 victory the following night at Compton Ice Arena.

Buckeye coach Steve Rohlik can usually find the good in any game (that BG debacle being the exception) but he knew a chance wasted when he saw.

"This is a disappointing loss," he said. "We had an opportunity to win two games on the road and fell short."

The Buckeyes (4-3-1, 1-1-0 Big Ten) played without injured All-American forward Tanner Laczynski for a third straight game but they knew scoring was always going to be at a premium when these two teams meet.

Ohio State made its first visit to ND since St. Patrick's Day when the Fighting Irish (4-3-1, 1-1-0) defeated the Buckeyes 3-2 in overtime in the conference championship game.

"The last time we were there it stung pretty hard obviously," OSU senior Brendon Kearney said.

Both teams advanced to the Frozen Four last season with Notre Dame finishing runner-up to Minnesota Duluth. The Bulldogs went to South Bend last weekend and swept the Irish.

Notre Dame was looking to earn back some national respect, but the Buckeyes were in the same situation and rode the 23-save effort from senior Sean Romeo for his third career shutout and an early goal by senior Mason Jobst for the opening win.

Jobst scored a power-play goal at 7:59 of the first period. Junior defenseman Wyatt Ege and freshman Gustaf Westlund assisted.

Romeo kept the Irish off the board with 12 of his 23 saves coming in the second period. Cale Morris stopped 22 of 23 shots for the Irish.

"This was a great team win," Romeo said. "The team played a really good defensive game. Anytime we can start off Big Ten play with a win we will take it."

OSU was 1 for 3 on the power play; ND 0 for 1 in front of 4,595 fans.

The victory was the 900th in program history.

"This was our most consistent effort of the season," associate head coach Steve Miller said. "The guys played with heart and with a purpose. We were determined tonight, and we played determined. It's fun to get rewarded. We cleaned up our penalties and the power play came through for us. Sean played great and we played great in front of him."

Jobst opened the scoring again in the rematch with his third goal of the season at 3:25 of the first period off assists by junior Carson Meyer and senior Freddy Gerard. Colin Theisen tied it at 11:58 of the second and Joe Wegwerth scored unassisted at 13:48 of the third to give the Irish the win before a crowd of 4,165.

Morris had 38 saves while sophomore Tommy Nappier stopped 36 shots but still lost for the first time as a Buckeyes (6-1-1). This season he has a 1.62-goals against average and .949 save percentage in five games (four starts).

Ohio State lost for the first time when scoring first since Dec. 31, 2016, vs. Miami (Ohio), ending a streak of 26 games.

The Buckeyes next play a nonconference series Nov. 9-10 at Colgate.