

No. 15 Ohio State Offense Gets Shut Down In First Loss Of The Season, 63-55 To Nebraska



Ohio State women's basketball had its undefeated stretch to start the season stopped at seven games at the hands of Nebraska, who took down the Buckeyes 63-55.

The loss moves Ohio State to 7-1 and 3-1 in the Big Ten, while the Cornhuskers improve to 7-4 and 5-3 in the conference, and also stay undefeated at home in six games at the Pinnacle Bank Arena.

"Give Nebraska credit, they played harder, they were more prepared, they played a better game, they played more to win," Ohio State head coach Kevin McGuff said. "It was just a disappointing performance on our part. We just really lacked focus and energy today."

The Buckeyes, who averaged 89.9 points per game and shot 50.2 percent from the field on the season coming into this game, had one of the worst shooting performances in program history against Nebraska.

Ohio State was completely shut down on offense, shooting 27.2 percent from the field, the seventh-worst rate in team history. The record is held by a Jan. 3, 1991 game against Purdue where the Buckeyes shot 24.2 percent (15 of 62) in a 105-45 loss.

"Our shots weren't falling today, but that's definitely not an excuse," sophomore guard Jacy Sheldon said. "I think we knew Nebraska wanted to slow it down, keep the game in the 50s, and we let them do it, so that's on us, we didn't play our best game, but hopefully we have another shot at them."

Despite the offensive struggles, Ohio State was down just six points, 57-51, with 2:04 to play thanks to a three-point make by junior forward Dorka Juhasz, who played in her first game since Dec. 10.

After a Nebraska turnover, sophomore guard Madison Greene hit another three to make it a three-point game with 1:24 to go in the fourth quarter.

But Nebraska guard Sam Haiby, who had made one of her first 10 attempts, got a crucial and-one to make it 60-54 with 44 seconds to go in the game.

While she didn't shoot well, Haiby was still very productive against Ohio State, tallying 11 points, eight rebounds and 10 assists.

Also productive was senior Kate Cain, Nebraska's 6-5 center, and the program's all-time leader in blocks, had a monster performance, finishing the game with 22 points, 12 rebounds and nine blocks on 10-of-14 shooting. Four of her blocks came in the fourth quarter.

"We had no answer today, we didn't prepare very well," McGuff said on guarding Cain. "We didn't have a good plan as coaches, and certainly, we didn't have anybody that could come close to guarding her today."

Following the and-one, Cain split a pair of free throws, and Greene turned it over on a travel call, leading to the Cornhuskers holding onto the win.

Juhasz struggled in her first game back, but still finished with a double-double, racking up 13 points and 12 rebounds while hitting on 5 of her 17 attempts from the field.

"It's good to have her back," McGuff said. "She was a little bit out of rhythm I think from being off for so long."

Even with the shooting struggles, four Buckeyes - Greene, Juhasz, junior forward Aaliyah Patty and Sheldon - finished in double figures.

Nebraska outscored Ohio State 16-9 in the second quarter to take a 30-21 lead into halftime. Cain led the Cornhuskers with 11 points and five rebounds in the opening 20 minutes.

The Buckeyes really struggled against Nebraska's stifling defense in the first half, shooting just 9 of 37 (24.3 percent) from the field and 1 of 13 (7.7 percent) from three. Sheldon led the team with seven points.

Ohio State opened the third quarter on a 6-0 run to cut the deficit to three points, but Nebraska outscored the Buckeyes by six the rest of the frame to cancel it out and take a 45-36 lead into the fourth quarter.

Next up, Ohio State heads back to Columbus for a Thursday home matchup against Michigan. The Wolverines are ranked No. 13 in the AP poll and are currently undefeated at 10-0 on the season.

"We'll take a lot (from this game)," Sheldon said. "We'll go back and watch film, definitely learn a lot from this game, and then focus on our next game, the team up North."

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