

# No. 25 Ohio State Falls To No. 17 Duke 81-72 In ACC/Big Ten Challenge



Facing its first true road environment of the season at Cameron Indoor Stadium on Wednesday, No. 25 Ohio State (5-2) was unable to overcome No. 17 Duke (7-2), falling 81-72 in the ACC/Big Ten Challenge.

The adverse atmosphere did not phase the Buckeyes early as Ohio State opened the game with an 8-2 run, sparked by a three-pointer and floater by guard Sean McNeil. But the Blue Devils quickly raced back, pulling ahead 11-10 with 15:08 to play in the first half.

From there, Ohio State and Duke went back and forth, trading the lead four times before locking into a 22-22 tie with 6:31 left in the first half. However, the Blue Devils took control of the game from that point, utilizing a 17-7 run to close the half with a 39-29 lead.

The primary culprit of Ohio State's first-half struggles was turnovers, as Duke produced 18 points off of 10 Ohio State turnovers during the game's first 20 minutes. The Blue Devils finished the night forcing 16 Buckeye turnovers, scoring 20 points off of them.

While the Buckeyes saw some first-half struggles offensively, freshman guard Bruce Thornton kept OSU steady while hitting all four of his shots and producing a team-best 8 points entering the locker room. Thornton finished the night with 11 points on 5-of-8 shooting while adding two assists and a steal.

Duke's lead ballooned to as much as 13 in the second half, as the Blue Devils held a 38-25 advantage with 15:55 to play. However, junior forward Zed Key paced the Buckeyes early in the second half, hitting all five of his shots in the frame, and helped OSU cut Duke's lead to five after finishing an and-one opportunity with 11:54 to go. The Blue Devils repelled Ohio State, however, quickly lifting their lead back to 10, 59-49, with 10:13 left.

Again, the Buckeyes pulled within five as Key powered through contact for a layup to make it 59-54 with 9:05 to play in regulation. However, Ohio State was unable to make timely stops on the defensive end of

the floor, allowing Duke to keep the Buckeyes at arm's length for the rest of the way.

Although Key and Sueing struggled in the first half, combining for just 7 points on 3 of 8 shooting, the veteran duo came alive in the second frame. Key scored 17 of his game-high 21 points in the second half, while Sueing tallied 9 second-half points, hitting three free throws in the game's final 20 minutes before fouling out with 40 seconds remaining.

The Blue Devils employed a double-big lineup for much of the night, opting for freshmen centers Kyle Filipowski (7-0) and Dereck Lively II (7-1) to share the floor. The duo helped Duke stake out a 34-31 advantage on the glass while playing a key role in the Blue Devils' 13 offensive rebounds. Filipowski powered Duke with a team-high 16 points and seven rebounds, while Lively added 11 points and five boards.

The Buckeyes' second unit struggled to keep pace with Duke, as the Blue Devils staked out a 26-9 advantage in bench scoring. Senior center Ryan Young led the way for the Duke reserves, dropping 10 points while sharpshooting forward Jacob Grandison added 9 points while shooting 3 of 5 from the field.

Duke also tallied 16 assists on 25 makes, led by five dimes from veteran guard Jeremy Roach — who added 13 points.

Ohio State is back in action on Saturday, returning to Value City Arena to host St. Francis (Pa.) at noon. The game will be televised on Big Ten Network.