

Ohio State Bullies Maine In The Lane In 95-61 Rout



Ohio State utilized a dominant performance in the paint, where the Buckeyes outscored Maine 64-28, to blow out the Black Bears 95-61 on Wednesday at Value City Arena.

The Buckeyes (8-3, 1-0 Big Ten) reigned over the contest for much of the night, leading for all but 30 seconds while shooting a blistering 61.2 percent from the field. Ohio State assisted on 23 of its 41 buckets.

Maine (6-6, 0-0 American East) jumped out to a 6-5 lead after forward Gedi Juozapaitis and guard Ja'Shonte Wright-McLeish hit back-to-back threes to lift the Black Bears in front. However, that's the only time the Black Bears held an advantage over the Buckeyes. Ohio State forwards Zed Key and Brice Sensabaugh combined to score the game's next eight points and push the Buckeyes back ahead 13-6 with 15:49 to play in the half.

The Buckeyes and Black Bears traded buckets until a three from Juozapaitis cut Ohio State's lead to 18-13 with 14:35 remaining in the first half. That five-point deficit is the closest Maine would come to turning the game in its favor, and the Buckeyes ran away from the Black Bears thanks to a 14-0 run across a five-minute stretch to lift its advantage to 40-18 with 5:06 left in the frame.

Maine used a 6-0 run to crawl back within 16 with 3:49 to play in the half, but Ohio State closed the half with a 7-2 run, lifted by a mid-range jumper from guard Bruce Thornton with seven seconds to play in the frame, and took a 47-26 lead into the locker room.

Transfer guard Sean McNeil surpassed 1,000 career points — a majority of those coming from his time at West Virginia — after hitting a three-pointer with 2:51 to play in the opening half.

Ohio State opened the second half with a 7-0 run, widening its lead to 54-26, and controlled the second half with ease. The Buckeyes did not allow the Black Bears to get within 20 points in the final frame

while shooting a red-hot 69.0 percent during the period.

The Buckeyes cleaned the glass against the Black Bears, registering a 39-27 rebounding advantage which was boosted by 10 offensive rebounds. Sensabaugh led Ohio State with seven rebounds.

Ohio State's offense came from a variety of contributors, but Sensabaugh led the way with a game-high 19 points on 8 of 12 shooting. The Orlando native also registered his best game as a facilitator, producing a career-best seven assists. Key produced 15 points while Sueing added 14 on 5-of-9 shooting. Freshman guard Bruce Thornton stuffed the stat sheet with 11 points, six rebounds and five assists. Freshman center Felix Okpara gave the Buckeyes a boost off of the bench, as well, adding 10 points and four rebounds to go along with a block.

While Ohio State's offense was led by a committee of scorers, the Black Bears relied on a pair of bucket-getters all night. Guard Kellen Tynes and Juozapaitis scored 19 and 16 points respectively, while the Black Bears shot 39.1 percent from the field and 6 of 25 from three.

Ohio State closes out its nonconference schedule against Alabama A&M on Dec. 29 at Value City Arena. The game will tip-off at 3 p.m. and be televised on Big Ten Network.