

Ohio State Falls To Indiana 66-54 For Fourth Straight Loss



The Ohio State men's basketball team dropped its fourth straight contest, 66-54, to Indiana at Assembly Hall in Bloomington, Ind. on Jan. 11.

"Tough second half for us," Ohio State head coach Chris Holtmann said. "Give Indiana credit for making timely shots and really defending well. I want to begin by giving them credit here first, and we've got to find a way to figure some things out here quickly.

The Buckeyes failed to score through the first 6:05 of the second half, surrendering an 8-0 run which gave the Hoosiers a 39-34 lead. Senior wing Andre Wesson connected on a three-pointer at the end of the shot clock to end the drought.

A triple by freshman guard D.J. Carton gave the Scarlet and Gray a 45-43 lead with 10:24 left, but the Hoosiers responded with a 10-0 rally to seize all momentum and propel them to victory.

"Credit to them, they're a good team." Ohio State junior big man Kaleb Wesson said. "They got disruptive in the second half and took us out of some our stuff and made us turn the ball over."

Indiana senior guard Devonte Green led the Hoosiers to an upset win with 19 points and five rebounds on 5-of-8 shooting, while sophomore guard Rob Phinisee added 13 points and seven boards.

Despite the loss, Andre Wesson played great for Ohio State, leading the team with 15 points on 5-of-9 shooting and adding seven rebounds. Junior big man Kaleb Wesson struggled from the floor (3 of 11), but pitched in a double-double effort with 11 points and 10 boards.

"Our senior was terrific today, as he's been," Holtmann said of Andre Wesson, "but we've got to get more (offense) across the board."

Indiana started strong at home with a 5-0 lead, which the Hoosiers pushed to 13-5 on back-to-back Rob Phinisee three-pointers.

Andre Wesson responded with a 5-0 run by himself to cut Indiana's lead to three. After another Hoosier bucket, Carton cut the lead to 15-13 with a three-pointer.

After Ohio State made it a two-point game, the Hoosiers fired off a 10-3 run, and it appeared as though the game could get away from the Buckeyes in the first half.

However, Andre Wesson changed the course of the game with an exceptional play. With his brother Kaleb Wesson looking to make a pass off the block, Andre cut into the lane, but the pass was intercepted.

Instead of sulking, Andre sprinted down the floor and caught Phinisee from behind, blocking his shot into Ohio State junior guard C.J. Walker's hands. Then, Andre dashed back down the court, trailing Walker, who missed a layup, where Andre grabbed it off the rim and dunked it for a much-needed Buckeye basket.

The putback dunk sparked a 7-0 Ohio State run, which turned into a 15-1 stretch for the visitors.

"Not trying to lose four in a row. That's it," Andre Wesson said. "This is my last year, I'm not trying to lose four in a row. That's the approach I came in with."

Stiff defense by Ohio State held Indiana to only made field goal in the final 12:45 of the first half, and it was a putback on a missed free throw with 9:57 left. The Hoosiers were able to hit 6 of 12 foul shots in that span, however, tying the game at 31 before Kaleb Wesson knocked down a triple for a 34-31 halftime lead.

The Hoosiers entered the game No. 290 in three-point percentage at a paltry 30.2 percent. They started red-hot from distance against the Buckeyes, however, hitting four of their first five triples. They finished the game 6 of 12 from deep.

Ohio State out-shot Indiana from the field (45.8 to 32.1 percent) and three-point line (58.3 to 50 percent) in the first half, while hitting 7 of 12 triples compared to 4 of 8 from the Hoosiers.

The Buckeyes turned it over eight times in the first frame, while Indiana only coughed it up four times. Although Ohio State was much more efficient on free throws (83.3 to 52.9 percent) across the game's first 20 minutes, it only made 5 of 6, while the Hoosiers hit 9 of 17.

Ohio State was completely outplayed in the second half, however, shooting just 21.4 percent from the field (6 of 28) and 14.3 percent (2 of 14) from beyond the arc. Meanwhile, the Hoosiers hit 52.4 percent (11 of 21) of their second-half attempts, including 2 of 4 triples.

After a 11-1 start and early-season wins against Villanova and Kentucky, the Scarlet and Gray continued their losing skid with their fourth Big Ten loss.

"It's a work in progress right now," Holtmann said. "We definitely have some offensive issues that we have to work out."

Ohio State's struggles have no quick fix to solve all its problems on gameday, the work must be done throughout the week.

"It's practice, our practice habits have got to get better," Andre Wesson said. "And once they get better, we'll be able to turn this thing around. It's all practice habits."

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