

Ohio State Knocks Off Iowa In High-Scoring Affair, 92-88



When two teams who boast top-five offenses and bottom-third defenses in the country meet, sparks are bound to fly, and they most certainly did in No. 23 Ohio State's (16-4, 8-3 Big Ten) 92-88 win over No. 21 Iowa (14-5, 8-2 Big Ten) on Monday evening.

Late in this high-scoring contest, Ohio State led 88-87 following a jumper from graduate forward Tanaya Beacham, and the Hawkeyes called a timeout with just 34 seconds remaining.

Out of the timeout, it was Iowa sophomore guard Caitlin Clark with the ball in her hands, up to 43 points on 16-of-27 shooting at that point, but her shot was off, and after Ohio State sophomore guard Rikki Harris collected the rebound, the Hawkeyes were forced to foul the rest of the way in the Buckeyes' 92-88 win at Carver-Hawkeye Arena.

Junior guard Jacy Sheldon and senior guard Taylor Mikesell have been Ohio State's most consistent scorers this season, but it was junior forward Rebeka Mikulasikova who helped lead the Buckeyes in the first frame.

She had 14 points on perfect 5-of-5 shooting in the opening quarter, with four of those shots coming from beyond the arc, surpassing her previous career-high of three triples in just 5:34 of play.

Though Mikulasikova was an assassin from deep, Iowa had its own sharpshooter in sophomore guard Caitlin Clark, who finished with 13 points in the first quarter on 5-of-9 shooting. The two titans went back and forth before a layup from freshman forward/guard Taylor Thierry gave the Buckeyes a 28-27 lead as the quarter came to a close.

The Hawkeyes knocked down their first two shots of the second to take a 31-30 lead, and the teams then combined for a nearly two-minute-long scoring drought that was broken by Iowa's Monika Czinano with 5:27 remaining in the half to make it 33-30. Mikesell responded with a triple on Ohio State's ensuing possession to tie things up at 33-all.

Minutes later, down 38-37, the Buckeyes had the chance to take the lead after sophomore guard Rikki

Harris was fouled on a 3-pointer, but she connected on just one of her free-throw attempts, and Clark knocked down a triple at the other end to make it 41-38. The Hawkeyes would go on to lead 48-44 at the half.

In the second frame, Clark and Czinano combined for 16 points on 7-of-8 shooting, while Mikesell led the Buckeyes with nine points on 4-of-5 shooting.

Clark continued operating as a cheat code for Iowa in the third, either scoring or assisting on every point of the Hawkeyes' 7-2 run to open the second half and take a 55-46 lead.

Iowa later led 57-48 with 6:29 remaining, but another triple from Mikulasikova kicked off a 9-4 by the Buckeyes to make it 61-57 with under three minutes to go. Ohio State was then foiled by Clark, who connected on a 3-pointer to make it 64-57.

The Buckeyes continued to fight, however, keeping the deficit close before Mikesell knocked her second triple of the game to make it 68-66 heading into the fourth. Ohio State then took its first lead since early in the second quarter, going up 71-68 after a triple from Sheldon and layup from Harris.

Two lead changes and over two minutes later, Ohio State led 79-76, but Iowa took off on a 7-0 run to make it 83-79 with just over five minutes remaining.

After a pair of free throws by Iowa with 4:31 remaining to make it 85-82, the teams combined for a scoring drought that lasted 2:34 that was broken by a layup from Mikesell, and after a turnover by Clark, Sheldon scored in transition to give the Buckeyes an 86-85 lead.

Ohio State would go on to win 92-88, with Mikesell as the leading scorer for the Buckeyes with 24 points. Clark led Iowa with 43 points on 16-of-28 shooting, including 7 of 14 from beyond the arc.

Ohio State will be off the court for a week, returning to face Rutgers at home next Monday with tip set for 6 p.m.