

Ohio State Secures Significant Upset, Dethrones No. 2 Purdue 73-69 In First Game Since Chris Holtmann Firing



Ohio State (15-11, 5-10) secured a massive upset victory in its first game since Chris Holtmann's firing, defeating No. 2 Purdue (23-2, 12-3) 73-69 Sunday afternoon at Value City Arena behind masterful offensive performances from guards Jamison Battle and Bruce Thornton.

The Buckeyes' victory, their first over a top-five team since dethroning No. 1 Duke at home on Nov. 30, 2021, was powered by their stellar offensive play, with the home team shooting 50.0 percent from the field and 36.4 percent from three in the second half. 14 of the team's 28 baskets came from the duo of Battle and Thornton, who exploded for a combined 39 points, with 27 of those coming in the second half.

Purdue was dominant to start, scoring the game's first eight points behind three makes in four attempts. The Buckeyes got their first basket off an and-one from Bruce Thornton, beginning a hot stretch for the sophomore guard that included a triple and second-chance jumper that brought his team within four, 12-8, with 15:38 left.

After a basket from Boilermakers guard Fletcher Loyer, Ohio State cut the deficit to 14-11 thanks to the efforts of senior center Zed Key, who stripped Zach Edey on the paint then connected on a three on the other end. Things continued to swing in the Buckeyes' favor following an Edey basket and Devin Royal free throw, with the home team getting two straight baskets — including a driving dunk from Roddy Gayle Jr. — to tie the game at 16 with 10:24 left.

But Purdue quieted the crowd on the ensuing possession with a dunk from Edey, kickstarting a quick 6-0 Boilermakers run that put them back up 22-16. Ohio State managed to stay within striking distance of the heavily-favored Boilermakers as the half progressed, cutting the deficit to three points on three separate occasions, the third being two Thornton free throws to put the score at 28-24 — and give Edey

his second foul of the half — with 4:30 left.

After both teams exchanged turnovers ahead of the final media timeout, the Buckeyes scored on consecutive possessions — including Austin Parks' first points of the season — to give them a 29-28 lead with 3:07 remaining. Then, after the two teams traded two-point scores, Ohio State closed the half with six straight points — four of those from Thornton — to take a 35-30 lead into the locker room.

Ohio State closed the first half on a 14-2 run due to some hot shooting, as they made six of its final 10 shots of the period. Purdue, meanwhile, was held without a field goal for the final 5:51 of play. (14-of-30 at the half, 11-of-27 for Purdue)

Despite Purdue making four of its five shots, Ohio State managed to extend its lead in the early portion of the half due to the efforts of fifth-year forward Jamison Battle, who exploded for 11 early second-half points, including a sequence of three straight threes, to put his team up 50-38 with 14:20 left.

Battle's personal 9-0 run was broken by a triple from guard Lance Jones and a dunk from Edey, a sequence that allowed the Boilermakers to slowly chip away at the lead and eventually trail by five, 54-49, after a put-back dunk from Edey, part of a 6-0 run for Purdue.

Ohio State broke the run with a Thornton basket with 7:48 left, and an extended sequence of traded baskets allowed the Buckeyes to sustain a two-possession lead across the next five minutes of action. After a Trey Kaufman-Renn and-one cut the lead to four, 62-58 with 4:20 left, Ohio State pushed its lead back to seven on its next possession off a triple from fifth-year guard Dale Bonner.

Purdue hit four straight free throws out of the final media timeout to trail 65-62, and, after two Ohio State misses out of an Ohio State timeout, Purdue tied it at 65 with a triple from Jones. The Buckeyes took the lead right back off a Battle layup, and, after Key stripped Edey on the other end, Battle added another two points at the free-throw line, putting Ohio State up 69-65 with 34 seconds left.

Purdue scored on an Edey dunk on the next possession to cut it to two with 16 seconds left, but Ohio State hit on four free throws from Thornton and Battle to close out the upset victory.

Ohio State was led in the win by the duo of Battle and Thornton, who scored 17 and 22 points on a combined 14-of-25 shooting. Key was third in scoring with nine points, while he also added a career-high five steals, all coming at the expense of Edey. Purdue was led by Edey, who earned a double-double with 22 points and 13 rebounds.