

Ohio State Suffers First Big Ten Loss At Indiana, 67-51



There's not a team that Ohio State has more familiarity with than the Indiana Hoosiers. Since 1949-50, the Buckeyes have faced off with their neighbors to the east more than any other foe, and on Jan. 6, the two squared off for the 134th time in that span, playing their 64th game in Bloomington and their 46th game in historic Assembly Hall.

Neither Assembly Hall its predecessor, the Gladstein Fieldhouse, have been friendly to the Buckeyes. Ohio State (9-3, 3-1) entered its matchup with the Hoosiers (11-3, 2-2) with a 19-44 overall mark in Bloomington and an 11-34 record in Assembly Hall - compared to a 39-31 record in Columbus.

And in their first trip to Indiana in nearly two years, Ohio State couldn't weather a superlative performance from star IU forward Trayce Jackson-Davis to secure what would have been Holtmann's third win in town as Ohio State's head coach and the 10th victory of the season for the Buckeyes, who were winners of five straight before the 67-51 loss.

The game was not without its turmoil for Holtmann's squad, though. After an early 7-0 run to snatch a 15-7 lead, capped by a layup for Joey Brunk, the former Hoosier, Indiana rallied, and Ohio State fell cold. Indiana rattled off nine points to snare an 18-16 edge, and the two went back and forth for the remainder of the half, despite two separate scoreless streaks for the Buckeyes that spanned several minutes.

Neither team was helped by some paltry shooting from deep, at just 4 of 22 from downtown combined in the first half - three from the Buckeyes, two from IU.

The second offered more of the same. The two sides opened by trading some points but quickly went cold. The Buckeyes shot only 4 of 11 from the field in the first nine minutes of play in the second half, while Indiana went just 5-for-19 shooting, expanding only slightly on a 33-30 first-half lead, bumping it up to 46-41 before a Eugene Brown III jumper snapped what had been a nearly three-minute scoreless streak for the Buckeyes.

Those Buckeyes would edge as close as one point after a pair of Branham free throws, down to 46-45, but a quick flurry from IU, capped by a Jackson-Davis breakaway and-one layup gave Indiana its largest lead of the game at seven points, 52-45. A deep Johnson triple gave Ohio State brief life, but a 9-0 response extended Indiana's lead to 61-48, as Ohio State's ability to keep up ran out.

The Hoosiers coasted in the final four minutes to victory. Ohio State was limited severely by a dreadful shooting performance, hitting only 16 of its 52 shots from the field (30.8 percent). Branham led the team in scoring for the second straight game with 13 points on 5-of-13 shooting, while Liddell's post-COVID woes continued. He scored only 11 points and knocked down 3 of 12 shots, though he did corral nine rebounds to claim a near-double-double that he may soon hope to forget. Jackson-Davis led the game with 27 points.