

Ohio State Unable To Overcome Slow Start, Drops Sixth-Straight Game In 62-41 Loss To Michigan State



Ohio State could not find an offensive rhythm while Michigan State handed the Buckeyes their sixth-consecutive loss in a 62-41 decision on Sunday at Value City Arena.

The Buckeyes (11-14, 3-11 Big Ten) shot 28.3 percent (17 of 60) from the field, including a 6-of-29 mark from beyond the arc in the loss. Ohio State dished out just five assists while registering 11 turnovers, which Michigan State (16-9, 8-6) turned into 14 points. The Buckeyes' 41 points were their lowest-scoring output since Feb. 10, 1996, which also came in a loss to Michigan State, 55-41.

It took just 4:30 of game action for Ohio State to hit more three-pointers than it did its last time out —shooting 1 of 14 against Northwestern on Thursday — cashing a pair of triples to take a 6-4 lead with 15:30 remaining in the first half.

Ohio State's offense went silent from there, however, as the Buckeyes missed their next eight shots while Michigan State forward Joey Hauser drilled a pair of three-pointers to give Michigan State a 12-9 lead with 8:26 to play in the opening frame.

The Buckeyes endured another prolonged stretch without a bucket, missing 10-straight shots while enduring a 7:14 scoring drought, and Michigan State utilized a 13-3 run to widen its lead to 27-11. But, Roddy Gayle Jr. cashed a three-pointer with five seconds left in the half to cut the deficit to 27-14 entering the locker room.

Ohio State shot an abysmal 19.2 percent (5 of 26) — including a 3-for-15 mark from three-point range —while turning the ball over eight times during the first half. Michigan State posted a significant advantage in the paint, outscoring the Buckeyes 14-2 in the lane, while also out-rebounding Ohio State 23-17.

Bruce Thornton and Zed Key scored Ohio State's first nine points of the second half, while the Buckeyes cut their deficit down to eight, 31-23, with 16:20 remaining in regulation. Michigan State pushed its advantage back to 12, but a pair of three-pointers on back-to-back possessions from Sean McNeil kept the Buckeyes in stride with the Spartans, trailing 38-31 heading into the under-12 timeout.

Ohio State cut the lead down to as little as five, 38-33, thanks to a pair of buckets from forward Brice Sensabaugh, but Michigan State responded with a 13-2 run to pull back in front 51-35 with 5:56 remaining in the contest. From there, Michigan State closed the game with little resistance, sending the Buckeyes to the 11th loss in their 12 games.

McNeil and Sensabaugh led the Buckeyes, tallying 10 and 8, respectively. However, neither player got into a rhythm, as McNeil shot 4 of 13 from the field while Sensabaugh totaled 21.4 percent (3 of 14) shooting. Thornton added 9 points, all of which he scored in the second half.

Hauser posted a game-high 22 points while drilling six three-pointers to lead the Spartans to victory. Guard Tyson Walker added 10 points in the win.

Ohio State hits the road for a clash with Iowa at Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Thursday with tip-off set for 9 p.m. on ESPN2.