

Ohio State Women's Basketball Loses To No. 19 Iowa 77-68 Despite Juhasz's Efforts



Looking to win its second straight game, this time against a difficult opponent in one of the toughest places to play in the country, Ohio State started out hot against No. 19 Iowa.

Threatening to end a 30-game home win streak — the second-longest home win streak in the NCAA to Baylor's 49 that dates back to a 92-74 loss to Nebraska on Jan. 28, 2018 — the Buckeyes started out the third quarter with an advantage, but the Hawkeyes responded with a 14-4 run in that quarter to take a 53-49 lead.

Ohio State scored three at the end of the frame to make it just a one-point game heading into the fourth, but from there, the teams went back and forth throughout the final frame before Iowa began to pull away, taking the 77-68 victory.

"We didn't guard the ball real well down the stretch, and allowed Iowa to get to the free-throw line and get too many easy baskets," Ohio State head coach Kevin McGuff said. "Offensively I thought we had a lot of good opportunities, but we just didn't knock down some of the shots we got late in the game."

The Buckeyes couldn't find much momentum in the fourth quarter, as well as throughout the second half, not making a field goal for nearly a four-minute stretch (3:54) in the final 10 minutes. In the second half, Ohio State shot just 26.3 percent (10 of 38) from the field.

"I actually thought in the second half we got better shots around the basket, we just didn't make them," McGuff said. "Hey, you want to come on the road and beat Iowa? You're going to have to capitalize on those opportunities."

Senior guard Kathleen Doyle was the big factor in the Hawkeye's win, finishing with 26 points, eight rebounds and seven assists, all of which were at least tied for team highs, in a strong all-around performance.

"She's a great player, and we just didn't guard the ball very well," McGuff said. "We didn't keep her in front, you have to keep her in front and make her score over you. She was getting by us and getting easy shots at the basket."

On the other end, sophomore forward Dorka Juhasz was crucial for the Buckeyes all night, finishing

with a double-double: 22 points and 16 rebounds. She also improved dramatically at the free throw line, an area that has been a struggle all season. Coming in hitting only 41.5 percent of her attempts, Juhasz hit 5 of 6 from the charity stripe.

"She played hard, she really did a great job on the boards, she moved well on offense," McGuff said. "She got some threes, but she also got some shots in the paint, so really good performance by her."

Juhasz hit a three with 3:02 to play to make it a four-point game, but Doyle kept pushing inside and kept getting to the free throw line, and scored eight consecutive points for Iowa, and 11 of the final 15 points down the stretch to keep the lead, and the win, in tact.

Following a recent stretch of hot shooting from three, 11 of the first 13 shots Ohio State attempted against Iowa were from behind the arc. Four of those 11 went in, and the Buckeyes finished the first half making 7 of 17 threes against the Hawkeyes.

But Ohio State went ice cold from deep in the final 20 minutes, hitting just 1 of 15 attempts, including missing its first nine.

"When they play zone, they really try to crowd the paint," McGuff said. "You're going to have to make some shots."

The Buckeyes took a 39-37 lead into halftime thanks to 12 points and seven rebounds by Juhasz, both of which were game highs. Freshman guard Jacy Sheldon also got off to a strong start, finishing the opening half with seven points and three assists on 3-of-4 shooting. She ended the night with 13 points, five rebounds and three assists.

Also with a big performance for the Buckeyes was sophomore guard Janai Crooms, who finished with 16 points on 7-of-13 shooting.

On the night, Ohio State shot 35.2 percent from the field (25 of 71) and 25 percent from three (8 of 32). Despite the loss, the team committed a season-low seven turnovers.

"That was big. We took care of the ball, and that was a big deal," McGuff said. "Hopefully that's an encouraging sign that we did a better job with that tonight."

The Buckeyes move to 11-8 on the season and 4-4 in Big Ten play, while Iowa improves to 16-3 and 7-1 in the Big Ten, which is tied for the conference lead.

Ohio State has a week off before taking on No. 20 Maryland at home at 6:30 p.m.

For four free issues of the weekly print edition of Buckeye Sports Bulletin, no card required, sign up at the link here: <http://www.buckeyesports.com/subscribe-4issue-trial/>