

Bruce Thornton's 21 Second-Half Points, Game-Winning Three-Pointer Leads Buckeyes To Dramatic 73-70 Win Over No. 18 Maryland



Ohio State (14-9, 6-6 Big Ten) picked up a big-time upset win Thursday night at Value City Arena, coming back from 17 down and using a sensational second-half performance from Bruce Thornton over No. 18 Maryland (17-6, 7-5) to prevail 73-70 and earn their fourth win in five games.

The Buckeyes seemed to be dead in the water when they put themselves in a 17-point hole late in the first half, came back to trail by six, then trailed again by 11 midway through the second half, but things changed on a dime when Thornton put his team on his back with the game on the line.

The Buckeyes' three-time team captain erupted for 17 points in the final 6:59 — including the game-winning three off a crossover, step-back three that banked into the basket — to lift Ohio State to the dramatic three-point win.

Ohio State looked as if it was in for a long night after it missed six of its first seven shots and allowing Maryland to get seven straight easy baskets to trail 15-2 with 15:04 left after a jumper from sophomore guard Rodney Rice.

The Buckeyes woke up after a three-point play from John Mobley Jr. on the next possession, which ignited a 10-2 run that allowed it to trail 17-12 with 12:02 left, but that positive play didn't last for long.

The home team faltered again on both sides of the floor, allowing Maryland to score at will while missing seven of their next eight shots to go down 39-22 with 3:30 left after a layup from senior forward Julian Reese.

The Buckeyes finally stopped the bleeding when Bruce Thornton broke a 7:55 field goal drought at 3:10, and that began a 10-2 run that gave the Scarlet and Gray some momentum heading into the half,

trailing 41-32.

Still, Ohio State shot just 36.0 percent from the floor (9 of 25) while allowing Maryland to make 59.3 percent of its attempts from the field (16 of 27).

Ohio State continued that positive momentum into the second half, holding Maryland to just 1-of-9 shooting to start the period to trail 47-42 with 12:35 left after a Sean Stewart steal and layup, forcing a Maryland timeout.

Maryland broke a 5:59 scoring drought with a Rice three out of the break, but the Buckeyes were not fazed and stayed within six to eight points across the ensuing minutes.

Ohio State then had a chance to cut it to five points with a wide open Mobley three-point attempt, but he missed, and the Terrapins took full advantage with a Selton Miguel triple on the other side of the floor to go up 57-46 with 8:48 left.

The Buckeyes battled back again, though, due to the efforts of Thornton, who erupted for 13 points in 4:49 to ignite a 17-4 run that put them up by one, 66-64 with 2:10 left after a Thornton three that brought the Buckeye faithful to their feet.

Maryland went back in front 68-66 with a pair of free throws from Queen — a play that fouled out Sean Stewart in the process — but Thornton continued to put on his cape by forcing a goaltend and a foul on an aggressive drive, putting the Buckeyes back up 70-68 with 49 seconds left.

After Maryland tied the game again at 70 on the ensuing possession with a Rice layup, Thornton delivered the final blow by banking in a step-back three-pointer to give the Buckeyes a 73-70 with seven seconds remaining, and Maryland missed two three-point attempts on the other end to close out the improbable win.

Thornton scored 21 of his 31 points in the second half on 8-of-11 shooting, while he also added a team-high six assists and five rebounds. Parrish was the Buckeyes' only other double-digit scorer with 13 on 5-of-9 shooting, while Royal had a team-high 11 assists and seven points.

Maryland was led by Reese who scored a game-high 24 points and 13 rebounds on 7-of-9 shooting. Queen added 13 and eight.

Ohio State will look to win its fifth game in six tries Sunday afternoon when it travels to Nebraska for a matchup with the Cornhuskers