

Buckeyes Upset Bid Falls Short Late Against No. 15 Texas A&M



Ohio State suffered its first loss of the season on Friday night at Value City Arena, succumbing to poor shooting and rebounding to fall to No. 15 Texas A&M by a score of 73-66.

The Buckeyes (1-1) were entrenched in a tight back-and-forth battle with the Aggies (2-0) for the first 32 minutes of the game, with the two teams exchanging leads 19 times throughout that span of play. But the momentum would shift at the 7:16 minute mark after a made jumper from standout Texas A&M guard Wade Taylor IV, which gave the Aggies a 55-53 lead. This sparked a strong final seven minutes for the Aggies where they would hold a lead for the rest of the game and outscore the Buckeyes 18-13, eventually leading to the 6-point defeat.

“Give A&M credit, I thought they played really well,” Holtmann said. “Their guards played well, so give them credit for the win. I thought our guys did some really good things. We just have to do a few things a little better.”

The Buckeyes attempted to mount a late comeback after a Bruce Thornton three-point play cut the deficit to 63-60 with just 2:54 remaining, but the final surge would be cut short due to some dominating play down the stretch from Texas A&M guards Tryrece Radford and Wade Taylor IV, with the Aggies closing the door for good on a Taylor floater that would extend the lead to 68-62 with 1:17 remaining in the game.

Ohio State’s late struggles stemmed from an extended period of inadequate shooting and rebounding. The Buckeyes shot just 36.4 percent from the floor and failed to make a three-point basket in the final 24:21 of game action. They also allowed the Aggies to gather three offensive rebounds in the final five minutes of the game, a series of back-breaking plays for the Buckeyes that was headlined by an offensive board and put-back basket from forward Andersson Garcia that lifted Texas A&M to a 61-56 lead with 4:50 remaining.

This trend was part of a game-long struggle for the Buckeyes, where they allowed the Aggies to gather 16 offensive rebounds that led to 19 second-chance points, as opposed to just nine second-chance points for the Buckeyes.

“Texas A&M is a physical team,” fifth-year forward Jamison Battle said. “It’s just constantly knowing you have to go to the glass and make sure that your man is boxed out. And I think that’s something where we had the emphasis on it, we just didn’t do our best job executing it. And I think that’s something we have to learn from,”

As for its shooting, Ohio State’s shortcomings fell on the three-point and free-throw lines. The Buckeyes mustered up just four three-point makes on 19 tries, a measly 21.1 percent, and shot just 10-17 (58.8 percent) from the charity strike. Conversely for the Aggies, they would ice the game with eight makes in 10 attempts from the free throw line and also shoot 15-32 (46.9 percent) from the floor in the second half. Like the Buckeyes, they also failed to connect on a three-point make in the final 20 minutes.

The Buckeyes were led in the loss by Thornton, who finished with a career-high 24 points on 8-20 shooting, while also tacking on two rebounds and five assists. The Aggies were spearheaded by Radford and Taylor, who netted 21 points a piece on a combined 16-38 (42.1 percent) shooting.

Ohio State will look to get back in the win column on Nov. 15 when they welcome Merrimack (1-1) to Value City Arena.