

# Fourth Quarter Scoring Drought Dooms Ohio State In 65-52 Loss To UCLA



No. 8 Ohio State (20-2, 9-2 Big Ten) went toe-to-toe in a road battle with No. 1 UCLA (22-0, 10-0 Big Ten) for the first 31 minutes of the game on Wednesday night, but a fourth-quarter scoring drought was ultimately too much to recover from in its 65-52 loss.

Despite some shooting issues, Ohio State was in position to pull the upset over UCLA tied at 44 with 9:26 remaining, but a field goal drought that lasted 7:17, allowed UCLA to mount a 19-1 scoring run.

Through the first five minutes, the Buckeyes were more than holding their own against the No. 1 team in the country. Ohio State forced UCLA into five turnovers in the first 5:17 of the game, which resulted in seven points on the other end to take an early 13-6 lead.

After a 2-for-8 shooting start, UCLA knocked down back-to-back three-point shots to fuel a 7-0 scoring run over 1:22 to tie the game at 13.

The Buckeyes defense seemed to settle down, forcing three more turnovers in the next 2 and a half minutes to take a 16-13 lead. However, the Bruins knocked down another triple and a pair of free throws to take an 18-16 lead into the second quarter.

The Bruins' run only continued in the second. The Buckeyes committed four turnovers in the first 2:06 and led by star center Lauren Betts, UCLA scored the first six points of the second quarter.

Ohio State appeared to be in dangerous territory when Betts scored her seventh and eighth points of the quarter with a layup at the 4:19 mark and grew their lead to 10, but Kevin McGuff's group dug in defensively and only allowed two points the rest of the first half. Offensively, the Buckeyes didn't exactly catch fire in the closing stretch of the first half, but they scored six points in the last four minutes to trim the Bruin lead to 30-24 at halftime.

After scoring just eight points in the second quarter, Ohio State struggled to find an offensive rhythm out of the halftime break. The Buckeyes didn't make a field goal for the first three minutes of the half. Ohio State's defensive intensity persisted though, and after forcing the Bruins into a pair of three-point misses, junior forward Cotie McMahon scored back-to-back baskets to cut UCLA's lead to 38-35.

A mid-range jumper from Bruins' guard KiKi Rice did little to halt Ohio State's momentum, as freshman point guard Jaloni Cambridge drained a 3-point basket on the next play.

Trailing by four with time dwindling in the third quarter, McMahon collected a loose ball and made a buzzer-beating mid-range jumper to make the score 44-42 headed into the fourth quarter.

For the first time in the second half, Ohio State tied the game after Cambridge made a floater at the 9:26 mark.

UCLA packed a huge counterpunch to Ohio State's surge. Rice and Betts were tough for the Buckeyes to slow down, as they combined for 8 points on the 19-1 scoring run, and on the other end, Ohio State went ice cold offensively and missed eight straight shots.

The Bruins' massive run made the score 63-45 with only 3:16 to go, and all but ended the Buckeyes' chances of coming up with the road win.

The Buckeyes ended the game on a 7-2 spurt, but it was too little and too late as UCLA won its 22nd straight game by 13 points.

Although Ohio State forced 23 UCLA turnovers and only committed 11 turnovers, it shot 20-of-68 from the field (29.4 percent) while UCLA was much more efficient making 26-of-57 field goals (45.6 percent).

In her toughest test as a Buckeye, Cambridge performed admirably. She led the team with 21 points on 7-of-20 shooting (35.0 percent) tied for a team-high with eight rebounds and had a game-high six assists.

Betts was the leading scorer for the Bruins she had 19 points on 8-of-13 shooting and a game-high 14 rebounds.