

Gray Ties 3-Point Record In OSU's 94-53 Win Over Charlotte



No. 12 Ohio State's 94-53 win over Charlotte on Tuesday at the Schottenstein Center was marked by a historic night from junior shooting guard Chance Gray, who tied the program record for most 3-point shots made in a single game, going 9-of-14 from beyond the arc for a team-high 31 points. It wasn't all good for the Buckeyes though, standout freshman point guard Jalonni Cambridge suffered an injury early in the third quarter and didn't return to the game.

Cambridge, who has seemingly been the motor behind the Buckeyes' offense in their first game, picked up right where she left off in the team's season opener.

Cambridge scored or assisted on each of the Buckeyes' first 15 points, giving the team a 15-6 lead through the game's first six minutes.

Cambridge used her speed and ball-handling ability to successfully navigate the 49ers' defense, and she created a specific connection with Gray, who started her career night by knocking down three consecutive 3-point jumpers.

Gray's 3-point barrage was part of a 23-2 scoring run, where the Buckeyes held the 49ers scoreless for the last 6:11 of the first quarter.

At the end of the quarter, the Buckeyes' four 3-point makes were two more than the amount of total field goals the 49ers had in that quarter.

Senior forward Ajae Petty found a rhythm against the 49ers' zone defense to start the second quarter and she made back-to-back layups to preserve the team's 22-point lead early on in the second period.

The Buckeyes gave up more points to the 49ers in the second quarter, but the full-court press defense was effective in causing havoc.

Fifth-year guard Taylor Thierry and Cambridge combined for four steals in the first five minutes to help give the Buckeyes a 41-12 lead.

The 29-point advantage allowed McGuff to get rotational players in for the remaining 2:52 of the half. Some self-inflicted wounds offensively, including three turnovers and a pair of missed free throws, helped Charlotte to slightly cut into the first-half lead, and the Buckeyes led 43-17.

The Buckeyes' relentless first-half pressure fueled the team to force 20 Charlotte turnovers. Any positive energy from the Buckeyes' excellent first half was taken out of the building when Cambridge went down with an injury after she was fouled and ultimately fell on her back on a drive in the Buckeyes' first offensive possession.

Cambridge walked to the locker room while holding her lower back after the fall but joined her teammates on the bench later in the third quarter. Cambridge didn't return to the game.

After the game, Ohio State head coach Kevin McGuff said the injury was to her lower back, but he didn't think it was anything long-term.

Without their freshman point guard, the Buckeyes struggled on both ends of the floor in the immediate aftermath, and the 49ers started a 15-5 scoring run.

Gray and Ohio State star forward Cotie McMahon helped steady the ship, as the pairing combined for 14 third-quarter points to keep the Buckeyes up 22 with less than a minute to go.

Eboni Walker made a layup through contact to expand the Buckeyes' lead and Gray hit her fourth 3-point jumper of the quarter to increase the separation heading into the fourth quarter. Gray's third-quarter-closing 3-point shot officially gave her a new career-high, as she surpassed her previous high of 22 points.

Gray continued her magical night from beyond the arc immediately into the fourth quarter with her eighth 3-point jumper.

Closing in on Kelsey Mitchell's 3-point record of nine shots made from beyond the arc, Gray missed a pair of 3-point attempts that would've tied the record. Finally, Gray received a ball screen, stepped back, and drilled the record-tying 3-point shot to give the Buckeyes an 83-51 lead with 4:23 to go in the game.

"I was confused while I was still in the game," Gray said when she was asked if she knew about the record during the game, "And then towards the end, they were like, 'You have one minute to make one more 3, so I kind of went in there and just pulled something, and it went in.'"

Gray was taken out of the game for the final time shortly after her record-tying shot and was subsequently greeted with a big round of applause from the Buckeye faithful in attendance.

"She's a really terrific scorer from the perimeter, and obviously she really shot it well tonight," McGuff said of Gray's performance. "She's been working really hard on shots. She shows up every day in full practice and works with (Associate Coach Carla Morrow) and (Assistant Coach Jalen Powell), so it's great to see that work pay dividends."

The Ohio State bench ended the second half much better than they did the first half and finished the

game on an 11-2 scoring run.

As a team, the Buckeyes finished the game going 32-of-61 from the field for a field goal percentage of 52.5. Gray's 31 points easily led the team, and she had an efficient night shooting 11-of-17 from the field. Petty was the team's second-leading scorer with 12 points, and she made 4-of-7 attempts from the field.

Charlotte was much more inefficient than Ohio State and only made 19-of-54 field goal attempts. The 49ers were led by Alexis Andrews, who scored 15 points after making 5-of-15 field goal attempts.