

McMahon Experiences Continued Growth In First March Madness Outing



It was the first of what will likely be many NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament games for Ohio State freshman forward Cotie McMahon on Saturday, but for most of the Buckeyes' 80-66 win over James Madison, she looked like a seasoned veteran.

Ohio State faced a 16-point first-half deficit, and McMahon - with 11 points on 3-of-5 shooting, including a 5 of 7 mark from the charity stripe - was the main reason the Buckeyes were able to stay in the contest, eventually cutting the deficit to three points at the half.

And with Ohio State still trailing midway through the third quarter, it was McMahon's three-pointer - the first of the game for the Buckeyes - that put her team up 46-44, a lead that they would not relinquish.

"You can see she's got God given talents but I think a lot of people have that," Ohio State head coach Kevin McGuff said. "But most people don't have the motor she has or the competitive character that she has, and that's why I think we are really just starting to scratch the surface of the player who she is going to be."

But while there were plenty of positives, there were also some moments of growth in the game for McMahon. Late in the contest, fouls began to stack up for both teams with 52 called across the entire game - 27 for James Madison, and 25 for Ohio State. McMahon had picked up a pair in the first quarter and was called for a charge in the third, and in the fourth quarter, she fouled out of the contest after picking up her fifth.

After picking up that fifth foul, McMahon's emotions got the best of her and she was called for a technical foul. This sent the Dukes to the line for four free throws, and while it did not impact the outcome of the game, McMahon acknowledged that in a tighter contest, things could have been different.

“Obviously, if it was a different outcome, if it was a close game, I could have really affected the team and possibly could have sent us home,” she said. “Of course I grew up from this, and it won’t happen again.”

McMahon has not been shy about playing with emotion all throughout her freshman season, and she said the nature of the game likely contributed to picking up the technical foul. But, with a tournament game under her belt and this moment to grow from, McMahon said it isn’t something she expects to happen again.

“Games like this, it’s win or go home,” she said. “I’m very passionate. I did think it wasn’t smart but it was something that won’t happen again. Emotions were high.”