

No. 2 Ohio State Extends Winning Streak To 13 Games With 82-69 Win At Penn State



Penn State returned to the historic Rec Hall for the first time since 1996 when it hosted second-ranked Ohio State on Thursday, but it was the Buckeyes (23-3, 14-1 Big Ten) that felt right at home, extending their winning streak to 13 games with a 82-69 win over the Nittany Lions (16-11, 7-9).

Ohio State stifled Penn State defensively, holding them to 44.0 percent shooting in the first half and holding a 37-24 lead at the break. The Buckeyes also forced 27 turnovers by the Nittany Lions - a season high for the home team - that turned into 30 points.

The Buckeyes blitzed the Nittany Lions early, connecting on their first five shots - including a pair of triples from fifth-year guard Jacy Sheldon and sophomore forward Cotie McMahon - to take a 13-0 lead with 6:34 left in the first. Penn State finally got on the board with a layup from guard Lacy Kapinus a minute later, but Ohio State responded with an 8-2 run to lead 21-4, having connected on nine of its first 11 attempts from the field.

Penn State center Ali Brigham answered with consecutive baskets, but Ohio State fifth-year forward Rebeka Mikulášiková hit back with a three-pointer. The Buckeyes then took a 26-10 lead into the second after the teams traded baskets in the final minute of the frame.

The Nittany Lions did not go away easily, however. After a jumper from Sheldon put Ohio State up 32-15 with 6:58 left in the half, Penn State responded with a 7-0 run to make it 32-22, and held the Buckeyes without a field goal for 4:21. McMahon broke the scoring run with a fast break layup with 2:37 left, and after another score by the Nittany Lions, Sheldon sent Ohio State into the break with a 37-24 lead after a late three-pointer.

Ohio State shot 51.7 percent in the first half and forced 14 turnovers by Penn State, though the Nittany Lions were able to hang tough by crashing the boards (holding a 17-10 advantage) and shooting 44.0 percent from the field.

The Buckeyes did not let up out of the break, utilizing an 11-2 run - with three-pointers from McMahon and guards Celeste Taylor and Taylor Thierry - to go up 48-26. The Nittany Lions' attempts to stay close were rebuked by Taylor and Mikulášiková, who combined for the team's next 10 points to go up 58-34 with 4:38 left in the third.

Thierry and Sheldon scored the next two baskets for Ohio State on strong drives to the rim, and another score by Sheldon - putting her up to 16 points on the night - helped sent the Buckeyes into the fourth with a 64-42 advantage.

Ohio State did not get on the board in the fourth until a free throw from Thierry with 8:07 left in the contest, followed on the next possession by a layup from McMahon. After a responding layup from Brigham, Ohio State answered with an 11-0 run to go up 78-48, the largest lead of the game for the Buckeyes.

Penn State guard Ashley Owusu broke the scoring drought with a second-chance layup, helping the Nittany Lions close on a 18-4 run in the loss. Ohio State will also await word on Harris, who went down with an apparent left leg injury late in the win.

Sheldon led the Buckeyes with 20 points on 9-of-15 shooting, while Taylor and McMahon (16 points) and Thierry (14 points) all finished in double digits. Owusu led Penn State with 11 points, while Kapinus had a game-high eight rebounds.

Ohio State will return to the floor on Sunday, set for Senior Day against Maryland at Value City Arena. The game is set to tip off at 2 p.m. and will be broadcast on the Big Ten Network.