

No. 21 Ohio State Struggles Offensively, Falls On Road To No. 23 Texas A&M 78-64 For First Loss Of 2024-25 Season



No. 21 Ohio State (2-1) suffered its first loss of the 2024-25 season in convincing fashion on Friday night at Reed Arena, succumbing to a poor shooting performance and some overall sloppy play to fall 78-64 to No. 23 Texas A&M (3-1).

Seemingly bewildered by Texas A&M's aggressive $\frac{3}{4}$ -court press defense all game, the Buckeyes had by far their worst offensive showing of the young season, shooting just 20-of-59 from the field (33.9 percent) and 8-of-30 from three (26.7) while also committing 10 turnovers. The Buckeyes' sloppy play also translated to the defensive side of the ball, where they committed 24 fouls that led to 32 made free throws from Texas A&M in 40 attempts, as opposed to the 16-of-22 made for the Buckeyes.

Ohio State started strong in each of its first two wins of the season, but against the Aggies it was the exact opposite. After Bruce Thornton connected on a three just 1:20 into the game for the first points of the game on either side, the Buckeyes cratered on the offensive end, missing 14 of its next 15 shots — including seven consecutive missed threes — and committing three turnovers in a span of 5:02, all part of an abysmal offensive stretch that caused the Aggies to take a commanding 17-5 lead with 10:10 left in the half.

Following a lengthy review on a loose ball scramble between Aaron Bradhaw and an Aggies player, Ohio State finally broke through off the hands of Ques Glover, who connected on a three with 9:40 left to cut the deficit to 17-8. Glover's three seemed to calm the Buckeyes down a bit in front of an intense road environment, with the team hitting on its next three-point attempts following coming from John Mobley at 6:30, Glover again at 4:20 and finally Meechie Johnson Jr. at 1:29.

Johnson's make put him over 1,000 career points while also cutting the Aggie lead down to just 27-22. Those three Buckeye guards ignited that run with Thornton riding the bench with two fouls for the final

7:39 of the half.

Those threes were all for naught at the end of the half. The Aggies scored the final four points of the half all on free throws, four of 15 makes in 18 attempts from the charity stripe in the first half — to take a 31-22 lead into the locker room.

Ohio State shot just 22 percent from the field (7-of-32) and committed eight turnovers, with the Aggies not doing much better shooting 24.0 percent (6-of-25).

Ohio State's offensive woes continued into the second half, with the Buckeyes misfiring on two of its first seven shots and committing another two turnovers to allow the Aggies to take a commanding 45-27 lead with 14:30 left. Mobley stopped the bleeding with a pair of threes on consecutive possessions, which seemed to inject some life back in the Buckeyes.

After Texas A&M brought the lead back up to 18, 51-33, following a C.J. Wilcher three with 12:26 left, Ohio State slowly marched back by scoring 15 of the game's next 23 points, seven of those coming from the efforts of Thornton, to trail just 56-45 with 9:03 left.

But Ohio State would not inch any closer to the Aggies the rest of the game. Texas A&M turned it back up on offense by making three of its next four baskets — along with seven more free throws — to go back up by 15, 70-55, with 5:04 left. Ohio State tried to get back in the game, cutting it to 13, 70-57, after a Devin Royal layup, but the Buckeyes missed four of its final five shots to allow Texas A&M to secure the double-digit win.

Despite the poor shooting performance, Ohio State had three players in double figures, with Thornton (15), Mobley (13) and Micah Parrish (10) leading on a combined 11-of-18 shooting. Thornton, who also had a team-high four assists, scored 12 of those points after halftime.

Texas A&M was led in the win by the scoring duo of Wade Taylor IV and Manny Obaseki, who each totaled 15 points on 3-of-8 shooting.

Ohio State will look to get back in the win column on Tuesday night when it hosts Evansville of the Missouri Valley Conference. Tip off is set for 7 p.m. on Big Ten+.