

No. 22 Ohio State Set For No. 7 Michigan On Thursday



No. 22 Ohio State (15-3, 7-2 Big Ten) is set for its biggest test of the season, as the Buckeyes, looking to continue their six-game winning streak, will welcome in No. 7 Michigan (17-2, 8-1) on Thursday.

The Buckeyes fell earlier this season at Michigan, 90-71, on New Year's Eve. Senior guard Braxtin Miller and junior guard Hevynne Bristow were both out for the contest.

The Wolverines return to Value City Arena for the first time since senior forward Naz Hillmon's 50-point game in a 81-77 loss to Ohio State on Jan. 21, 2021. This season, Hillmon is averaging 20.2 points and 8.8 rebounds per game on 57.9 percent shooting.

In addition to Hillmon, Michigan rounds out an exciting top three with senior guard Leigha Brown and senior forward Emily Kiser, both of whom are averaging at least 10 points. They help contribute to a Michigan team that's averaging over 70 points per game and holding opponents to under 60 points.

Like the Buckeyes, they are also one of the top shooting teams in the country, knocking down shots at a 45.9 percent clip. Their only losses are to Louisville and Nebraska, and the Wolverines themselves are on a five-game winning streak.

There's little question that Ohio State will be able to keep up with Michigan offensively, averaging 84.1 points per game. The Buckeyes are boosted by senior guard Taylor Mikesell and junior forward Jacy Sheldon, both of whom are in the middle of impressive runs.

Sheldon has scored 30 points in three of her last four games, and Mikesell scored a career-high 33 points in Ohio State's win over Maryland last week.

Despite the Buckeyes' offensive production, whether or not the Buckeyes step up on the defensive end will determine this Big Ten contest.

Making things more troubling for Ohio State is Michigan's rebounding ability, of which the Wolverines average nearly 40 per game, with 13 on the offensive end and 27 on the defense.

In total, they win 56.7 percent of their rebounding opportunities, according to Her Hoop Stats, which is eighth in the nation.

The game is set to tip at 7 p.m., and can be viewed on the Big Ten Network.