

No. 23 Ohio State Surges To 75-54 Shorthanded Victory At Nebraska For Second Straight Win



The No. 23 Ohio State men's basketball team defeated Nebraska 75-54 for its second straight victory on Feb. 27 in front of a crowd of 15,611 at Pinnacle Bank Arena in Lincoln, Neb.

Junior big man Kaleb Wesson controlled the paint against the Cornhuskers (7-21, 2-15), scoring 16 points and grabbing 18 rebounds along with one block and one steal.

Ohio State rode a hot start to a comfortable victory, leading by double digits for the final 31:42 and by at least 16 points throughout the entire second half.

Sophomore guard Duane Washington scored 14 points off the bench for the Buckeyes (19-9, 9-8), while junior guard C.J. Walker provided 15 points, five rebounds and three assists in the 21-point victory.

The Buckeyes dominated the Cornhuskers in their own building across a 43-27 first half, led by Washington's 14 points. Walker did a little bit of everything with 11 points, three rebounds and three assists in the first half.

Washington hit his first three triples of the game and Ohio State made nine of its first 11 shot attempts to take a 26-14 lead with 10:54 until intermission.

"He has helped us in a couple games right now get off to really good starts and he's got a good mindset about him whether he starts or comes off the bench," Holtmann said of Washington. "And those threes that he hit really gave us some confidence early."

The Buckeyes cooled off, though, going 4:46 without a field goal following the hot start, but the Cornhuskers only won that stretch by two points to cut the deficit to 30-18.

Despite winning by 21 points, Ohio State shot a forgettable 0 for 12 from three-point range in the second half after a 6 for 13 first frame.

"We missed some open ones tonight," Holtmann said. "They do a good job of flying at your shot, too."

After starting 5 of 6 from deep, the Buckeyes made just one of their final 19 three-point attempts.

"I thought we had some patchiness offensively that I didn't like," Holtmann continued.

Filling in for junior forward Kyle Young (ankle sprain), freshman forward E.J. Liddell scored five points and blocked four shots across the game's first 20 minutes. Liddell finished with eight points, five boards and five blocks.

The Buckeyes stifled the Huskers' efforts in the paint, blocking nine shots as a team, with senior wing Andre Wesson, Kaleb Wesson, Washington and freshman forward Ibrahima Diallo joining Liddell's block party.

Senior wing Andre Wesson scored nine points and grabbed five boards, while sophomore guard Luther Muhammad added nine points and six rebounds in a game where Ohio State was also without freshman forward Alonzo Gaffney (illness).

On the game, Ohio State shot 40.3 percent (25 of 62) from the floor, 24.0 percent (6 of 25) from beyond the arc and 79.2 percent (19 of 24) from the free-throw line. Nebraska struggled from every level, shooting 35.6 percent (21 of 59) from the field, 18.8 percent (3 of 16) from deep and 64.3 percent (9 of 14) from the foul line.

"It's a credit to our older guys," Holtmann said. "You're led this time of year by your older guys. Our captains - Kyle's obviously one of them - they're the ones that deserve the credit.

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