

Ohio State Claims 73-62 Upset Win Over No. 21 Maryland On Senior Night



Ohio State gave its seniors the perfect send-off from Value City Arena, picking up an upset win over No. 21 Maryland 73-62 on Senior Night Wednesday.

The Buckeyes (13-17, 5-14 Big Ten) picked up their second-consecutive win thanks to six double-digit scorers, including a team-best 16 points from Justice Sueing, while shooting 48.0 percent (24 of 50) as a team. The Terrapins (20-10, 11-8) couldn't recover from an early 14-4 deficit, as the Buckeyes held the lead for 37:55 en route to the victory.

Ohio State's seniors paced the Buckeyes early, as Sean McNeil, Isaac Likekele and Sueing combined to score 10 of their first 14 points, lifting OSU to a 14-4 lead with 15:41 remaining in the opening half. McNeil and Likekele stayed hot, scoring nine of Ohio State's next 10 points while the Buckeyes opened up a 25-15 lead with 7:05 to play in the half as Maryland's offense lagged behind, hitting 7 of its first 15 shots while tallying six turnovers to that point.

The Terrapins scored the next six points, and a three-pointer from Donta Scott pulled Maryland within four, but the freshman duo of Brice Sensabaugh and Bruce Thornton responded by scoring the next five points and pushing Ohio State's lead back up to 30-21 with 3:43 left in the frame. Sensabaugh added another bucket off of a jumper while McNeil splashed a three-pointer with 2:07 remaining in the frame, but the Buckeyes didn't score for the rest of the half, taking a 35-29 lead into the break.

McNeil and Likekele combined to score 19 first-half points while shooting a perfect 7 of 7 from the field during the frame. Freshman Felix Okpara was also a steady presence inside for the Buckeyes, scoring six points and corralling six rebounds — helping Ohio State stake out a 13-11 rebounding advantage during the half. The Terrapins countered with 54.5 percent shooting, while Julian Reese led the way with eight points.

Ohio State opened the second half on an 11-4 run, paced by five points from Sensabaugh, to push its lead to 46-33 with 16:05 remaining in the contest. But Maryland guard Ian Martinez — who entered the game averaging 5.8 points per game — scored the Terrapins next eight points, cutting OSU's lead to nine, 50-41, with 13:02 left.

A pair of free throws from Likekele and a jumper from Sensabaugh, with a Reese free throw sandwiched between, pushed Ohio State's lead back to double-digits, 54-42 with 10:28 to play. Maryland brought to within single-digits on several occasions, but Ohio State continued to counterpunch, and an emphatic dunk off of an alley-oop from Okpara made it 60-50 with 6:20 remaining.

After jumper from Reese to close the gap to eight, the Buckeyes exploded on a 7-0 run — capped off by a corner three-pointer from Sueing — to take their largest lead of the night, 67-52 with 3:31 remaining. Maryland guard Donald Carey scored the game's next eight points to make it a 7-point contest, 67-60, with 1:34 to play, but that's the closest the Terrapins would get as Ohio State closed out the win at the free throw line, picking up consecutive wins for the first time since Alabama A&M and Northwestern on Dec. 29 and Jan. 1.

While Sueing led the way for the Buckeyes, departing seniors McNeil and Likekele also contributed to the win, as Likekele produced 11 points and four assists before fouling out with 6:33 to play while McNeil added 10. Sueing, McNeil and Likekele were honored during Senior Night festivities prior to tip off. Thornton (10), Sensabaugh (12) and Okpara (12) also produced double-digit scoring, while Ohio State connected on all 20 of its free throw attempts.

Maryland was led by Reese and Carey, who scored 17 and 14, respectively while the Terrapins shot 44.0 percent (22 of 50) as a team.

Ohio State finishes out the regular season with a bout against Michigan State on Saturday in East Lansing, Mich. The game tips off at noon on ESPN.