

Ohio State Falls On The Road To Maryland, 77-72



No. 18 Ohio State (19-5, 11-4 Big Ten) was outscored 25-15 in the pivotal third quarter of its 77-72 loss on the road to No. 13 Maryland (20-6, 12-3), likely falling out of Big Ten title contention on Thursday.

The teams battled early in this contest, with Ohio State requiring a triple from junior forward Rebeka Mikulasikova to tie things up at nine-all with 4:56 remaining in the opening frame. The Buckeyes then retook and extended their lead on back-to-back scores from Mikesell, who finished the first quarter with eight points.

Sheldon added a pair of late free throws to give the Buckeyes a 19-12 lead at the end of the first, with 10 of those points coming off six turnovers by the Terps.

Ohio State increased its lead to 10 early in the second quarter, 24-14, but Maryland forward Chloe Bibby connected on a triple, and forward Mimi Collins scored two possessions later to cut the deficit to 24-19.

The Buckeyes would not be held at bay, however, as junior guard Jacy Sheldon and Mikesell would knock down 3-pointers on consecutive possessions to push the lead back to 11, 30-19. The Terrapins continued shooting their way into the game, with Bibby hitting a triple to make it 32-24, but Mikesell again responded from deep to keep the gap at 11 points, 35-24.

Ohio State later led 39-30 after a layup from Sheldon, but Maryland scored the final four points of the half to make it a five-point game, 39-34, heading into the locker room.

Early in the third, Ohio State head coach Kevin McGuff was forced to call a timeout after Maryland began the half on a 6-0 run. Out of the timeout, the Big Ten heavyweights went blow-for-blow, knocking down eight of the next 16 shots as the Buckeyes led 50-49 with 4:49 remaining in the quarter.

Things began to unravel for Ohio State, however, as Maryland took off on a 10-0 run, due in part to a technical foul called on McGuff after he argued with the officials concerning a foul called on Mikesell and a no-call on contact against Sheldon.

After four successful free throws by Maryland following McGuff's technical on top of a personal foul by Mikulasikova, graduate forward Tanaya Beacham broke the streak with a layup, and after a turnover by the Terps, Sheldon hit a layup to make it 59-54, the eventual score heading into the fourth.

Ohio State continued getting in its own way in the fourth, turning the ball over twice in the first two minutes as Sheldon picked up her fourth foul with 8:06 remaining. After Sheldon's departure, Maryland increased its lead to 67-57 with 7:32 remaining.

Trailing 69-61, Mikesell then knocked down her fifth triple of the night with just over five minutes remaining to make it 69-64, but Maryland responded with a 6-0 run to nearly ice the game, taking a 75-64 lead with 3:08 remaining. Ohio State cut the deficit to as few as five points, but was unable to complete the comeback against Maryland, falling 77-72.

Mikesell led the Buckeyes with 29 points, while sophomore guard Rikki Harris and senior guard Braxtin Miller had a team-high four assists, and Harris, Miller and Sheldon led with five rebounds. Forward Angel Reese led the Terps with 21 points.

Following the two-game road trip against Illinois and Maryland, Ohio State will return home on Sunday to host Wisconsin at 2 p.m.