

Ohio State Suffers Blowout 105-72 Loss To Iowa In Conference Title Game



No. 14 Ohio State's run in the Big Ten Women's Basketball Tournament came just short of a conference title, with the Buckeyes suffering a blowout 105-72 loss to No. 7 Iowa on Sunday.

The Buckeyes, making their first appearance in the conference tournament finals since the 2019-20 season, faced a 37-point deficit in the first half amid a poor shooting performance, finishing just 34.8 percent from the field compared to 62.1 percent shooting for the Hawkeyes, led by a 30-point triple-double from guard Caitlin Clark.

Ohio State showed fight early on, forcing turnovers on the first three possessions of the game for Iowa and jumping out to a 7-6 lead after a three-pointer from guard Taylor Thierry.

That ended up being one of the few positive developments for Ohio State on the afternoon, as the Iowa responded with a 20-2 run to close out the quarter with a 26-9 lead. The Hawkeyes connected on their final nine shots of the frame while the Buckeyes were just 1 of 10 after taking that early lead.

Iowa's lead continued to balloon throughout the second quarter. Clark continued her dominance, adding another 12 points in the frame, while forward Monika Czinano began to make her presence known with 11 points in the quarter.

After a triple from Clark to open the quarter, Thierry responded with a layup to make it 29-11, but that 18-point deficit would be as close as Ohio State got for the remainder of the contest. Iowa ended up outscoring Ohio State 35-15 in the second quarter while shooting 64.7 percent from the field, compared to just 27.8 percent shooting for the Buckeyes.

Iowa eventually led 61-24 at the half, shooting a blistering 72.4 percent from the field. The Hawkeyes also held a significant lead in rebounds, boasting a 26-12 advantage heading into the break.

Ohio State guard Taylor Mikesell and forward Cotie McMahon began to heat up in the third quarter, with Mikesell adding 11 points on 3-of-4 shooting - all from deep - while McMahon contributed 10 points. Despite outscoring the Hawkeyes 30-22 in the frame, Ohio State still trailed 83-54 heading into

the fourth.

The final frame featured more of the same, with the Hawkeyes outscoring the Buckeyes 22-18 in the last 10 minutes of the blowout loss. McMahon was called for a technical foul as frustration mounted, with Ohio State never able to cut the deficit to fewer than 27 points in the second half of the 33-point loss.

Ohio State saw Mikesell (24 points), McMahon (23) and Thierry (13) all finish in double digits, with McMahon adding a team-high seven rebounds. Several Buckeyes got into foul trouble, with guards Hevynne Bristow and Rikki Harris as well as McMahon and Mikesell all assessed four fouls.

Clark continued her dominance over the rest of the conference, scoring 30 points - including a 5 of 11 clip from deep - while adding a game-high 17 assists in addition to 10 rebounds for a triple-double, her second of the season against the Buckeyes.

The loss set a new record for the largest margin of defeat in the conference title game, surpassing the previous 20-point margin set by Maryland's 104-84 win over Iowa in 2021.

The Buckeyes will now await their fate on Selection Sunday next week, expected to earn one of the top 16 seeds in the NCAA tournament and host their first- and second-round games in Columbus.