

Ohio State Suffers Largest Loss Of The Season 84-63 Against USC



In its second game of a road trip to Los Angeles, No. 8 Ohio State (20-3, 9-2 Big Ten) suffered its second straight loss by a score of 84-63 against No. 7 USC (21-2, 11-1 Big Ten) at the Galen Center on Saturday night.

Despite the loss, Ohio State stifled star USC guard JuJu Watkins for most of the night. Watkins missed her first 11 field goal attempts of the game and finished the night with 17 points on 5-of-21 shooting.

Ultimately for the second game in a row, Ohio State had a poor shooting night only making 20-of-68 shots from the field (29.4 percent). The Buckeyes were also dominated on the glass, the Trojans had 19 offensive rebounds, to out-rebound Ohio State 62-30.

It was a solid start for the underdog Buckeyes, who scored five straight points to take a 7-2 lead with 6:29 to go in the first quarter.

USC fought back and star forward Kiki Iriafen scored four points to lead a 12-4 scoring run to end the first quarter.

The Buckeyes went cold to start the second quarter, missing their first four of their first five field goals, but they managed to keep the Trojans in check to only fall behind 19-13. Senior guard Taylor Thierry converted an and-1 layup to keep the Buckeyes within three with 6:39 to go in the second quarter.

Thierry's three-point play didn't do much to change the momentum though. The Buckeyes struggled to guard the Trojans without fouling, and the home team made eight free throws during a 13-6 scoring run to go up 34-24 with a little over a minute before halftime.

Thierry made two free throws before the halftime buzzer sounded to cut the halftime margin to eight.

Neither team could gain much ground through the first three minutes of the second half, but USC guard Avery Howell drained a three-point shot to put the Trojans up 43-32 with 6:50 to go in the third quarter. Freshman point guard Jaloni Cambridge turned the ball over on the Buckeyes' next possession and the Trojans made a second-chance layup on the other end to go up by 13 points.

Ohio State got to the free throw line and responded with a 7-2 spurt to only trail by eight.

Junior guard Chance Gray drained a high-arching three-pointer to make the score 50-43 in favor of USC with only 2:14 remaining in the third quarter, but Watkins finally took the lid off the basket with her first field goal of the game. Watkins was fouled while she made her layup, she made the free throw to put USC back up 10. Watkins' and-1 layup started a 9-2 scoring run that ended the third quarter and put her team up 59-45.

It only got uglier for the Buckeyes in the fourth quarter. Ohio State really struggled on the glass and allowed seven second-chance points in the first 3:18 of the fourth quarter.

Ohio State only got within 13 points of USC's lead the rest of the game and USC went on a 14-3 scoring run late in the fourth quarter to go up 84-59 with 1:21 remaining in the game.

The Buckeyes scored the last four points of the game, but they still lost by more than 20 points for the first time all season.

Ohio State was led by Taylor Thierry in the loss, she finished the game with 14 points. Thierry only made three field goals on the night, but she connected on 8-of-9 free throws. Thierry also tied for a team-high five rebounds, while graduate guard Ajae Petty had a team-high four assists

Iriafen was tremendous for USC in the blowout win, she scored 24 points on 8-of-18 shooting.