

Recap: Ohio State Earns Win Over Rutgers, 80-71



Ohio State (15-3, 7-2 Big Ten) extended its win streak to six games, handling Rutgers (7-13, 0-8) on the road, 80-71.

The Buckeyes got off to a sleepy start as the Scarlet Knights started out with an 11-10 lead with 3:23 remaining in the first quarter as Ohio State was 3 of 9 from the field to begin the game.

A 3-pointer from redshirt sophomore guard Rikki Harris helped kick the Buckeyes into gear, and senior guard Taylor Mikesell's second triple of the game gave Ohio State a 22-19 lead at the end of the first.

A free throw from Rutgers forward Osh Brown tied things up at 22 early in the second, but it began a scoreless stretch of nearly four minutes for the Scarlet Knights as the Buckeyes improved to a 32-22 lead with under six minutes remaining in the quarter.

Rutgers stayed in the contest, however, by virtue of the free-throw line, of which the Scarlet Knights made four trips in the second quarter, resulting in seven of their 13 points in the frame. For the game, Rutgers finished 17 of 24 from the charity stripe, compared to 15 of 17 for the Buckeyes.

Ohio State later led by just six points, 34-28, but increased the lead to 38-28 with four points in a little over a minute of action, all of which came from junior guard Jacy Sheldon. The Buckeyes were held scoreless over the remaining 2:35, however, taking a 38-32 lead into the break.

Rutgers made a run early in the third, scoring on two straight possessions to make it 38-36, but it was Sheldon's steady shot that helped keep Ohio State ahead, as she embarked on a solo 8-2 run - including two triples - to make it 46-38.

The Scarlet Knights fought back to make it 50-46, but Ohio State continued dominating on the offensive end, going on a 9-2 run, five of which came from Sheldon, to make it 59-48 going into the fourth.

Ohio State looked comfortable ahead early in the fourth, but a 10-6 run by Rutgers forced head coach Kevin McGuff to call a timeout up 66-58 with 6:27 remaining, and freshman forward/guard Taylor Thierry hit a layup out of the break to increase the lead back to 10.

Rutgers again made things close, closing the gap to four points, 71-67 with under two minutes

remaining, but it was Sheldon that once again came through, connecting on a basket and free throw to put Ohio State up 74-67, and they would go on to win 80-71.

Sheldon led the Buckeyes in scoring with 32 points on 10-of-23 shooting. Mikesell finished with 21 points on 7-of-13 shooting, while Harris was 3 of 5 from beyond the arc, and led with five assists. Brown led Rutgers with 24 points on 10-of-16 shooting.

Ohio State will return home to face No. 8 Michigan on Thursday, with tip set for 7 p.m.