

Sammy Sasso Wins First Match In Return, Buckeyes Beat Chattanooga 36-6



Sammy Sasso made his long-awaited return to the mat against Chattanooga during a night in which nine out of 10 Buckeyes took home a win, beating Chattanooga 36-6.

Sasso had three takedowns in his match at 165 pounds and was able to beat Jackson Hurst of Chattanooga 12-6. He earned his first win since the 2022-23 season after being shot in a carjacking over that offseason and sitting out the entire year in 2023-24

No. 3 Nick Feldman opened his season very strong with five takedowns in the first period, earning the Buckeyes their third tech fall of the night to finish the dual off.

Bryce Hepner was the only Ohio State wrestler who didn't win, being forced to medically forfeit after a first period injury.

Here's how it went at every weight class:

125 pounds: No. 11 Brendan McCrone started the night off strong, showing yet again that he is great in unorthodox situations and earning a takedown in the first period when it looked like he had a disadvantage. He earned a two-point and a four-point nearfall in the second period to take a 9-0 lead. He had another takedown and a four-point nearfall in the third to take the match 16-0 by tech fall and give the Buckeyes an early 5-0 lead.

133 pounds: No. 18 Nic Bouzakis suffered an early takedown in the first period, escaping immediately and after two more minutes of action earned a takedown of his own to take a 4-3 lead out of the first. He escaped to begin the second period and had another takedown with No. 24 Blake Boarman escaping to make it 8-4 after two. Boarman escaped to begin the third, but Bouzakis had another takedown right before Boarman had a reversal. Bouzakis' escape made it 12-7, which ended up being the final to give Ohio State an 8-0 lead.

141 pounds: No. 2 Jesse Mendez had an early takedown in the first period, with No. 23 Isaiah Powe taking almost a full minute to escape. Powe was able to take Mendez down, who escaped soon after. Mendez had a takedown as the first period buzzer sounded to make it 7-4. He had three takedowns and a four-point nearfall in the second to take a 20-7 lead. It took him just 11 second in the third period to win the match with a takedown 23-7. The Buckeyes took a 13-0 lead.

149 pounds: No. 11 Dylan D'Emilio had a quick takedown to begin the match against Bretli Reyna, who escaped after 51 seconds. D'Emilio responded with another takedown, leading 6-1 after one. D'Emilio's escape in the second was the only point in those two minutes, but D'Emilio had two more takedowns in the third period, one to beat the buzzer and earn another team point. He won the match 14-2, giving Ohio State a 17-0 lead.

157 pounds: In his return to the mat after a season-ending injury last season, No. 10 Paddy Gallagher, he and Noah Castillo went scoreless in the first period. Castillo escaped to begin the second, which was the only point with Gallagher trailing 1-0. He chose bottom to begin the third and escaped, sending the match to sudden victory in a 1-1 tie. In extra time, Gallagher had a takedown to win the match 4-1 and give the Buckeyes a 20-0 lead.

165 pounds: Sasso returned to the mat and had an immediate takedown and added two more in the first period. A reversal and two escapes by Jackson Hurst made it 9-4 through one. Sasso chose bottom to begin the second and had a reversal, coming out of the second period with an 11-5 lead. Sasso allowed an escape to begin the third and they rode out the score, Sasso winning his first match back by score of 12-6 due to his riding advantage. The Buckeyes had a 23-0 lead after his win.

174 pounds: Hepner moved up from 165 pounds for the match and suffered an early injury. He would return to the mat, but quickly aggravated the same injury and had to end the match early, giving the Mocs their only points of the match and making it 23-6.

184 pounds: No. 17 Ryder Rogotzke was quick to take a big lead over Kamdyn Munro with three takedowns, leading 9-2 after the first. Rogotzke began the second with a reversal, but Munro's escape and takedown made it 11-6. Munro had an escape and a takedown at the beginning of the third period to bring the match within one, but Rogotzke had another reversal and a four-point nearfall to take the match out of reach. He won 18-12 to give Ohio State a 26-6 lead.

197 pounds: No. 11 Luke Geog had two takedowns in the first minute of his match and took just one minute to get another, taking a 9-2 advantage out of the first period. Geog had another takedown in the second to make it 12-4 before he escaped to begin the third. He had two takedowns and earned a stalling point to win 20-5 and giving Ohio State a 31-6 lead.

Heavyweight: Nick Feldman, the No. 3 grappler in the natio, got off to a quick start with five takedowns in the first period. He had an escape and another takedown to finish the match and the dual, Feldman winning 19-4 and the Buckeyes winning 36-6.