Buckeyes Fall to 18-4 With Four Games Left In Regular Season

The Buckeyes were unable to steal a road victory in Madison despite the best efforts of Terence Dials. Dials went for 24 points on 10 of 16 shooting and 10 rebounds, but the Buckeyes were unable handle the Badgers largely because of their cold shooting from beyond the arc.

The Buckeyes seemed uneasy and uncomfortable shooting from the outside and it showed in the stat sheet as the team shot 4 of 16 from beyond the arc. Although the Buckeyes were unable to get the outside game working, they led the game until Ray Nixon hit a three with 2:25 left in the game, giving Wisconsin its first advantage since early in the first half at 69-66.

Alando Tucker paced the Badgers with 27 points, most coming in the paint, but the real story was the play of Ray Nixon down the stretch. Nixon emerged as the go to guy for the Badgers late in the game scoring ten of his 13 points down the stretch, bringing Wisconsin back from a five point deficit late in the game.

The Buckeyes had their chances, but sloppy play was their undoing. In a forgettable chain of events, Matt Sylvester tossed up an airball from beyond the arc in awkward looking heave with fifteen seconds remaining on the shot clock. That was followed by J.J. Sullinger kicking a crucial loose ball out of bounds following a bad Wisconsin miss. Then Terence Dials traveled following a rebound on the defensive end, giving the ball back to the Badgers yet again. Ohio State couldn't buy a break down the stretch, and Wisconsin kept getting the bounces. A Brian Butch homecourt roll on a three with 1:45 left in the game put the Badgers up by four and they would not look back from there.

Foul trouble plagued the Buckeyes from the early going as Terence Dials picked up his first foul on a reach-in 25 feet from the rim and spent the last five minutes of the first half on the bench. Joining Dials on the bench in foul trouble was his replacement, second string center Matt Terwilliger. This forced the Buckeyes to play a significant portion of the game greatly undersized in a four guard-one forward configuration. However, the Buckeyes were able to take a nine-point

advantage into the second half that lead would have been much larger had Dials been able to remain on the court.

The size Badger size advantage was apparent as the Badgers crashed the boards, out-rebounding Ohio State 32-24 and more importantly 11-5 on the offensive glass. No Buckeye aside from Dials was able to muster more the four boards for the game and in the end the Buckeyes did not play well enough down the stretch to overcome their poor three point shooting and lack of size on the glass.

The loss dropped Ohio State to 18-4 overall, and sole possession of third place in the Big Ten with a 7-4 conference record. They have four regular season games remaining before the Big Ten Tournament begins.