As conference play heats up the wins become more important. Tonight five games are on the MAC schedule, and all five have interesting subplots. Teams are at the point where, if they hope to compete for a division title and have a loss or two on their conference slate, they really cannot afford many more losses.

In the first game, which will be shown on SportsTime Ohio, Kent State (11-6, 2-1) will travel to Buffalo (9-6, 1-2) to lock horns with the Bulls in a MAC East clash. The Golden Flashes lead the all-time series between the schools 23-6, but Buffalo has defeated Kent in three of their last five contests, including a split last season. Kent is coming off a come-from-behind 69-66 win over Ohio University Sunday while the Bulls stunned Akron, 73-70, last weekend in Buffalo.

The Golden Flashes lost three games in a row before winning their last two, and was bolstered Sunday by the return of Carlton Guyton from a month-long suspension. Guyton is third on the team in scoring at 12.4 points per game, behind Justin Greene at 16.4 and Rodriguez Sherman at 12.5.

Kent has struggled on the road this season, winning just once in six tries.

Buffalo, who lost to Bowling Green at home and at Miami before the Akron win, is 6-2 at home this season. The Bulls are led in scoring by Zach Filzen, who scores 14.5 points per game and connects on 3-pointers at a 41.3 percent clip.

In other action Ohio University (8-9, 1-2) will head to Bowling Green (7-10, 2-1). BG leads the all-time series with a 70-58 advantage and last season the teams split their two games, with the home team winning both times.

Bowling Green will look to continue its surprising start in conference play. In front of the largest home crowd this season, BG knocked off Miami on Sunday to keep the RedHawks from the overall division lead while Ohio lost a lead in the final thirty seconds in falling at home to Kent State. Jordon Crawford has been a dynamo off the bench for the Falcons, scoring 10 points in four of the last five games while averaging nearly five assists in that stretch. Tommy Freeman continues to knock down triples with ease, ranking in a tie for 58th nationally at 47.2% from downtown. But only three players ahead of him have put up as many or more attempts than his 106 so far this season.

Akron, coming off that loss to Buffalo, will look to turn it around on the road in Oxford against Miami. The RedHawks lead the all-time series 23-20, but the Zips swept Miami last season.

Akron (10-7, 1-2) enters Millett Hall on a two-game losing streak, just the second time this season they've faced that, dropping back-to-back contests at Temple and Minnesota earlier this year. Since a strong outing against Kent State, Zeke Marshall has come back down to earth, averaging 6.5 points and 3.5 boards in the last two. The 19 turnovers committed by the Zips against Buffalo on Sunday set a new season-high. Miami (7-10, 2-1) struggled to find any offensive rhythm against Bowling Green, turning the ball over 20 times and shooting only four free throws in the game. Four starters reached double-figures but Allen Roberts was the only sub to score for the RedHawks as they lost the battle of the bench 33-4. Miami will try to use home-court advantage to reverse the trend in this series as the Zips have won four straight versus the RedHawks.

Ball State (11-4, 3-0) will travel to Eastern Michigan (4-12, 1-2) for a game the Eagles

absolutely have to have. But it will not be easy as Ball State, winner of five straight and eight of nine, will try to continue its longest winning streak since 2003-04. After trailing Central Michigan for much of the game on Saturday, Ball State took control down the stretch at the free throw line where they enjoyed a 42-10 edge in attempts. Despite leading the league in three-point percentage through three league games, the Cardinals continue to win by attacking the bucket. Western Michigan is the only team in the league whose attempted free throws match the number of free throws made by Ball State. Without the services of Brandon Bowdry for one game, Eastern Michigan was held to its lowest point total of the season at Western Michigan. Derek Thompson led the team with 17 but no one else scored more than seven. Dating back to the 2006-07 season, EMU has taken eight of 10 from the Cardinals.

In the final game of the evening, Western Michigan (9-7, 2-1) will go on the road to play at Toledo (3-14, 0-3).

Western Michigan shook off the loss to Ball State and rebounded with a strong second half run to put away Eastern Michigan its last time out. The Broncos depth has been their biggest ally so far this season; six players average over eight points per game. Matt Stainbrook continues to play well. He had 17 points and six rebounds in the win over the Eagles. Just as importantly, the big man has committed only 19 turnovers on the season, a welcome number for a true freshman. Malcolm Griffin had another big game against Northern Illinois, smashing his career-high with 31 after setting it a season ago versus the Huskies with 19. Unfortunately, the sophomore guard didn't get much help as the rest of the Rockets combined for just 23 points on 8-35 shooting, including 0-12 behind the arc. Delino Dear and the rest of the Rockets' frontcourt will need big performances as this is a match-up of the top rebounding team in the MAC versus the second-worst.

MAC Director of Communications Jeremy Guy contributed to this story