Jared Sullinger had another career day for the Buckeyes on Saturday afternoon as Ohio State (10-0) routed the South Carolina Gamecocks 79-57.

Nine days after he posted a career high (and freshman record) 40 points against IUPUI, Sullinger recorded another personal best as he grabbed 19 rebounds to go along with 30 points. 14 of the 19 were defensive rebounds, another freshman record set by Sullinger. It was an impressive performance against one of the nations best rebounding teams. The Gamecocks came into this contest averaging over 42 rebounds a game, which is sixth best in the nation.

“I key in on rebounding. If I’m not rebounding, I’m not playing hard,” Sullinger said. “Nineteen rebounds, I was really into the game.” His effort on the boards helped Ohio State out-rebound South Carolina 44-35.

Ohio State’s defense was key in this game. They Buckeyes absolutely suffocated the Gamecocks offense in the first half, holding them to just six points through 10 minutes of play. The Gamecocks missed 10 of their first 12 shots and were never able to find a rhythm offensively. Going into the game, Lighty knew that was going to be important, “Defense was the main key; it was our main focus. We wanted to come out and hit them first. We executed the game plan to a T. Defense is important to everyone but especially for me. The better we are

defensively, the better we are overall."

Meanwhile, the Buckeyes were giving the ball to Sullinger and letting him produce. The freshman forward was aggressive with his play early, getting to the line five times in the first eight minutes. After a four minute rest, Sullinger came back in the game and picked up right where he left off. After 20 minutes of play, he already had a double-double with 18 points and 10 rebounds. His last three points were the most exciting as he banked in a 30 foot 3-pointer as the first half buzzer went off. The crowd exploded as the Buckeyes doubled up the Gamecocks, taking a 42-21 lead into intermission.

South Carolina started the second half much better than they had the first. The Gamecocks went on a 9-3 run, cutting the Buckeyes lead to 15. Just when it looked like South Carolina had gained some momentum, the Buckeyes responded with a 14-4 run of their own, completely taking away any possibility of a comeback. With 10 minutes remaining, Ohio State had a 30 point lead and began to substitute freely.

The Buckeyes, now 10-0, are off to one of the best starts under Thad Matta. Only one of his teams started the season off with more wins -- the 2005 Ohio State Buckeyes were 11-0 before losing to Indiana. Although the current team and the '05 team had similar records, most people like to compare this year's Ohio State Buckeyes to the 2006-2007 squad that made it all the way to the National Championship game. The similarities are there, but head coach Thad Matta sees some differences, "It's a different makeup, it's a different dimension and a lot of people forget Greg [Oden] missed the first eight games that year... I think roles are a little more determined this time."

Who's Next?

The Buckeyes will host the North Carolina-Ashville Bulldogs on Tuesday, December 21. The game will be carried by the Big Ten Network and will tip-off at 8:30 PM EST.

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