The Ohio State Buckeyes (11-0) blasted the UNC-Asheville Bulldogs in an easy 96-49 win Tuesday night.

Senior guard David Lighty paced the Buckeyes early and often, scoring 13 of Ohio State's first 16 points before finishing the game with 29 total. Lighty hit seven 3-pointers in the game (five in the first half), shooting 7/10 from behind the arch and 11/16 from the field in what turned out to be his best performance of the season. "I was open so I just kept knocking shots down," Lighty said after the game. "I felt good after I knocked the first one down..."

Lighty had those open looks at the basket as a result of the Bulldogs defensive strategy. UNC-Asheville schemed to protect the paint by double-teaming Jared Sullinger almost every time he touched the ball. Because of this, there was an open perimeter player on nearly every possession for the Buckeyes. With the talent this Ohio State team has, that can be a disastrous approach if the shots are falling. It proved to be fatal for the Bulldogs last night as the Buckeyes shot a blistering 57% from the field and 47% from behind the three point line.

UNC-Asheville head coach Eddie Biedenbach addressed his defensive strategy during his postgame remarks, "We came out with some gimmick defenses to try and get them out of their game, but they are a very solid basketball team and that just did not work..." Those gimmicky defenses were picked apart by Ohio State's offense as the Buckeyes assisted on 20 of their 39 made field goals. "They do a great job of moving the ball, making the extra pass, and creating open shots," Biedenbach later added.

Ohio State started the game hot behind Lighty's impressive shooting. It only took the Buckeyes a little over 10 minutes to build a 20 point lead (33-12). After a brief four minute stretch where the game slowed down, Ohio State finished the half strong and led 48-24 after 20 minutes. As a team, Ohio State shot 59% from the field and 50% from the three point line in the first half. Both were season highs for the team.

The Buckeyes started the second half a little shaky as the Bulldogs scored the first eight points coming out of intermission. After an Ohio State timeout, the team seemed refocused and put the game away for good by going on a 28-6 run of their own later in the half. With eight minutes left in the game, the Buckeyes started substituting freely.

Jared Sullinger had a relatively quiet night from a scoring perspective, but the talented freshman made his impact in other areas of the game. In addition to his nine points, Sullinger grabbed 16 rebounds for the Buckeyes, tying the season/career high he set on Sunday against South Carolina. The big-man also showed off some pretty impressive passing abilities from the low block, dishing out five assists in 30 minutes of play. That number seemed relatively low if you watched the game, because it looked like Sullinger was finding wide open shooters and cutters all night while being double-teamed.

Almost every coach who has played against the Buckeyes this season has mentioned how difficult it is to defend this team. It's hard to just man-up on Sullinger in the post because he has the ability to score 40 points in one night. If teams double-team him, they're leaving three or four very capable and often-lethal perimeter shooters with room to pass the ball and find a wide-open look.

William Buford scored 14 points for the Buckeyes, Deshaun Thomas added 13 and Diebler had nine as the Buckeyes used their balance to overwhelm the Bulldogs. The 47 point margin of victory against UNC-Asheville was the highest of the season so far for the Buckeyes.

Who's Next?

Ohio State will host the Oakland Golden Grizzlies this Thursday, December 23. The game will

be carried by the Big Ten Network and will tip-off at 8:00 PM.

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