The Ohio State Buckeyes (25-2) dropped their second game in three tries yesterday, falling to the Purdue Boilermakers 76-63 in Mackey Arena.

Purdue's E'Twaun Moore had a career day for the Boilermakers, scoring 38 points while grabbing four rebounds, five assists and two steals. The senior guard from Purdue was unstoppable, connecting on 13 of his 18 shots (72%) and seven of his 10 3-point attempts. Every time the Boilermakers needed a big basket, they went to Moore. And every time they went to Moore, he delivered.

Purdue coach Matt Painter talked about Moore's big day, "He gets into those rhythms and gets going, he can score points in bunches. I've always thought he was one of the best guards in the country when he lets things come to him," Painter said. "He didn't force a lot. That's really, whether he takes 10 shots or 20 shots, the deal with him."

Moore's career day was a huge factor in the game, but the Boilermakers were aided by one of the worst games Ohio State has played this year. The Buckeyes were uncharacteristically sloppy with the ball, turning it over 18 times against Purdue. That's a far stretch from their season average of 10, a number that reflected a team that became one of the best in the nation at taking care of the ball. If you combine that with Ohio State's putrid shooting percentage, the Buckeyes shot just 38% from the field (while connecting on just four of their 15 3-point field goal

attempts), it’s hard to see how the Buckeyes remained competitive in the game.

Ohio State coach Thad Matta was disappointed with the loss, "We've got to continue to keep our focus," he said. "Our guys know we have to play better basketball and we have to get them ready to do that."

Taking a closer look at the numbers, Jared Sullinger appeared to be the only Buckeye ready to play on Sunday afternoon. The freshman big-man scored a team-high 25 points on 9-14 shooting (64%). If you take away his contributions, the rest of the team combined to shoot just 27% from the field. The Buckeye guards, who are usually very consistent, shot a combined 9-33 from the field. Breaking it down further, Lighty was just 2-9, Buford was 1-5, and freshman reserve Deshaun Thomas was 0-6.

The players know they need to step up in games moving forward, "We need to execute better on offense," Diebler said. "We had some turnovers that were self-imposed.”

And while Diebler reflected on the offensive execution, Sullinger talked about defense, “We're not playing team defense. We need five guys connected. Once we get that back, we're going to be all right."

It was a tough loss for the Buckeyes, but a big win for a Boilermaker team that has crawled to within one game of Ohio State in Big-Ten play. Just last week, Ohio State had a three game lead and appeared to have a stranglehold on the regular season conference championship. But with losses to Wisconsin and Purdue in a seven day span, the door has opened just a bit for the Boilermakers. Going down the stretch, the Buckeyes will host three of their last four opponents (Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin) and travel to Penn State. The Boilermakers have to hit the road in three of their last four games (at Indiana, Michigan State and Iowa), with just one home game when they host Illinois on March 1.

Ohio State’s loss on Sunday afternoon followed a trend for the top teams in the country. All four teams ranked in the top four of both the AP poll and the Coaches poll lost a game this week. Kansas fell to rival Kansas State on Monday, Pitt lost to St. John’s and Texas dropped a game at Nebraska on Saturday afternoon. All four of the top teams were defeated on the road, but Ohio State was the only team that lost to a ranked opponent. Kansas, Texas, Ohio State and

Pitt were the expected “No. 1 seeds” for the NCAA tournament coming into last week, so it will be interesting to see how each loss impacts these teams moving forward.

Quick Hits:

- Ohio State had more turnovers in the second half (nine) than made field-goals (six) against Purdue on Sunday afternoon.
- In their two losses this season, Ohio State fell victim to two of the best performances in the Big Ten this year. Jordan Taylor and E’Twaun Moore have combined for 65 points on 21-31 field goal attempts (68%) against the Buckeyes.
- Both of Ohio State’s losses have come on the road this year where their opponents (Wisconsin and Purdue) are a combined 30-0 this season.
- Overshadowed by the loss, Ohio State’s John Diebler became the Big-Ten’s all-time leader in 3-pointers made with 332.

Who’s Next?

The Buckeyes will host the Illinois Fighting Illini on Tuesday, February 22. The game will be televised by ESPN and will tip-off at 7:00 PM EST.