The Ohio State men's basketball team kicked off their season with a big win over Wright state Friday night, handling the Raiders 73-42 in front of nearly 16,000 Buckeye fans in Columbus.

Consensus preseason All-American Jared Sullinger battled through constant double teams and scored 19 points to go along with nine rebounds. William Buford chipped in 13 points of his own and Aaron Craft added 10. And while the Buckeyes managed a 31 point victory, Ohio State coach Thad Matta and the players felt like they didn't play their best basketball.

"I think we could have done better on the offensive end," Buford said after the game. "Just executing our plays and everything."

Finding a flow offensively was a challenge for both teams considering the whistle happy officials, who by the end of the game had called 48 fouls total. Thad Matta mentioned in his postgame press conference that it was hard for his team to find a groove when there wasn't a point in the game where three possessions played out without a foul. For a team looking to build an offensive identity without Jon Diebler's outside shooting -- the type of game that played out was the last thing they wanted.

"Well, we got in a flow at the free-throw line," Sullinger joked when talking about the game. But in truth, that's where the Buckeyes did the most damage. Ohio State scored more than a third of their points (26) at the free throw line on Friday night.

Defensively Ohio State was outstanding. The Buckeyes held the Raiders to just 13-41 shooting the ball (31%) while forcing 25 turnovers in the game. After scoring just 20 points in the first half,

Wright State was smothered to begin the second half where they went scoreless for five and a half minutes. During that stretch, the Raiders missed six consecutive shots while committing three turnovers. The Buckeyes shot off a quick 10-0 run during that span to blow the game wide open.

“We just picked up the intensity,” Sullinger said. “We got tired of it being back and forth. Even though we were up by 14, it was still back and forth so we just decided to put our foot on their throat.”

The Buckeyes actually used 12 sets of feet to step on Wright State’s throat as 12 players saw action in Friday night's game. In the previous two seasons, Thad Matta and the coaching staff have maintained a short rotation for their teams. In 2009, the Buckeyes really only played six guys -- and last year the team only went seven deep. An infusion of young talent from Matta’s most recent recruiting class has given him the ability to expand the rotation, and nine of the 12 players who saw the court played double digit minutes.

“You know, I’ve always said that I’d love to play every guy equal minutes across the board,” Ohio State’s coach explained. When asked whether or not this deep of a rotation would continue throughout the season, he responded, “As we move forward, when you play a big game Tuesday and then you play a game Friday, then you have three games in five days, the rotation can get a little bit tighter.”

With Wright State in the rear-view mirror, Ohio State can look forward to that big game Thad Matta referenced. The No.10 Florida Gators come to Columbus on Tuesday night for a rematch of last year’s game -- a contest the Buckeyes won 93-75 in Gainesville.

Florida took care of business in their season opener by handling Jackson State 99-59. With a ton of talent coming back, Matta knows how dangerous the Gators are. “It’s obviously a huge test for us. Florida is a very talented basketball team and I think we’ll be able to tell a lot about ourselves with how we come out and look on Tuesday night.”

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