

Top-ranked Buckeyes blow Hawkeyes out of Columbus

By Brendan Stiles

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COLUMBUS, Ohio – Oh, how things can change in a matter of two weeks.

Back on Jan. 4, the Iowa Hawkeyes had a six-point halftime lead on Ohio State at Carver-Hawkeye Arena before the then second-ranked Buckeyes pulled away with a 73-68 victory in Iowa City.

In the rematch on Wednesday, Ohio State, who came in ranked No. 1 in the nation, was in command from start to finish and disposed of Iowa at Value City Arena, 70-48. With the win, the Buckeyes moved to 6-0 in the Big Ten and remain one of only three unbeaten teams in the country now at 19-0 overall.

As for the Hawkeyes, who are now 7-11 overall, they are now just the opposite in conference play at 0-6, marking the first time Iowa has ever lost its first six Big Ten games in a season. The 48 points scored is also a season-low.

“I think everybody understands who we’re playing against,” Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said. “We’ve played six really good teams. But at the same time, the reality is we’re still 0-6. Nobody is happy about it.”

Unlike the previous match-up two weeks back, Ohio State jumped out to a commanding lead early it would not relinquish. One of the key components of that hot start for the Buckeyes was senior center Dallas Lauderdale, who scored seven of Ohio State’s first 12 points on the evening and finished with nine points going a perfect 4-of-4 on the floor.

"He did a great job of getting open, and that's what he does," junior guard Matt Gatens said after finishing with eight points and three rebounds. "He finds a way to score by just getting open around the hole, and once he gets down there, it's tough to stop a guy that long, and we didn't do it."

Meanwhile, the lead would continue to grow, and the Buckeyes went into halftime ahead 40-23.

With senior center Jarryd Cole dealing with foul trouble for the second consecutive game, Iowa got its most significant boost from junior forward Andrew Brommer. The Rosemount, Minn., native played 30 minutes off the bench for the Hawkeyes, leading the team with 12 points on 5-of-8 shooting, as well as six rebounds.

"I just felt like I was prepared," Brommer said. "The last two days of practice, I played really well. I just took that, was prepared, and went with it."

In addition to Brommer's 12-point effort, freshman forward Melsahn Basabe finished with 11 points, while junior guard Bryce Cartwright had 10 points and seven assists.

Once again though, turnovers played a significant role in the Hawkeyes' demise Wednesday, as Iowa committed 23 giveaways that the Buckeyes managed to turn into 20 of their 70 points.

The effort was better for the Hawkeyes in the second half, but by that point, the game was well in doubt, as Ohio State finished shooting 26-of-55 (47.3 percent) from the field.

"We didn't come with the energy level that was necessary to play the No. 1 ranked team, defensively," McCaffery said. "Offensively, we were a little bit sideways at times, I thought. But defensively, I thought their effort was what it needed to be at the start of the game for them."

Iowa returns home this weekend to face an Indiana squad that

plays at No. 18 Wisconsin on Thursday. The Hoosiers secured their first Big Ten win of the season on Jan. 15, defeating Michigan, 80-61. This contest will be on Jan. 23, with tip-off scheduled for 2 p.m. Central. Once again, the game will be aired nationally on the Big Ten Network.