



Jamar Butler buried a three as the shot clock expired with 1:19 remaining in the game to put the Buckeyes up by nine. From there, the Ohio State never looked back as the Buckeyes outscored the Spartans 12-2 in the final 3:50 to win their first game in East Lansing in fourteen years 79-68. The last time the Buckeyes beat Michigan State in East Lansing, Jimmy Jackson was running the court in Scarlet and Grey and Bill Clinton was beginning his first term. Since that victory in 1992, the Buckeyes had gone 0-12 there.

The outcome of the game was still very much in doubt when Thad Matta was forced to sit Dials after he picked up his fourth foul with 4:57 left in the game and a five point lead. The foul, a reach in beyond the three point arc, was unnecessary and breathed new life into the Spartans who quickly closed the gap to one on a Shannon Brown Jumper with 3:50 remaining.

Down the stretch the Buckeyes showed a lot of basketball I.Q. and team discipline, running the shot clock down to the nub and using crisp passes to play “keep away” from the Spartans. Their efforts in running down the clock were aided by key rebounds from Foster and Sylvester and Ron Lewis came up big with four free throws down the stretch.

Terence Dials was nothing short of dominating in scoring 19 points on 9 of 11 shooting and crashing the boards for 10 rebounds. Beyond the stats, Dials provided the Buckeyes a strong physical presence on both ends of the floor and

the injury riddled Spartans had no answer for him.

All in all this game was an impressive victory for the Buckeyes. They repeatedly showed the ability to work the ball into the post and to work the ball from the inside out. The skip passes that had been featured so prominently in wins against Illinois and Michigan reemerged as the Buckeyes worked the ball crisply around the perimeter. As a result the Buckeyes shot 44% from beyond the arc. As reassuring as it was to see the Buckeyes shoot over 40% from the three-point line, it was even more reassuring to see them shoot with confidence again.

This victory was key for the Buckeyes chances at a regular season Big Ten championship and gets them one step closer to earning a first round bye in the conference tournament. Additionally, the significance of this road victory will not be lost on the NCAA Tournament Committee and should have a profound impact on the Buckeyes seed for the "Big Dance."