



Ohio State coach Thad Matta wanted his team to continue the success it found against its last opponent -- Long Beach State -- after two miserable shooting performances against Duke and Northern Kentucky.

Doing so would require an outstanding performance against one of the better defensive teams in the country in Savannah State, who held Florida's high-flying offense to a season-low 58 points earlier this year.

The Buckeyes answered in a big way Wednesday night, shooting 48 percent from the floor and 53 percent from the 3-point line in an 85-45 demolition of the Savannah State Tigers.

Four Buckeyes scored in double digits, led by Deshaun Thomas' game-high 22 points. Thomas scored 21 of his 22 points in the first half and talked about the passion his team took to the court after the game.

"If we have great pace to our offense things will go well. The one thing coach preached before the game was having passion," Thomas said. "And we had passion out there."

The Buckeyes played like a possessed team to start the game, out-rebounding the Tigers 15-1 at one point in the first half. Savannah State only shot 37 percent from the field and a porous 10 percent from behind the arch.

"The thing that we have been harping on these guys the most is we have to get better," Matta said. "Don't go back to [yesterday]. Hopefully these things are in order and we can continue to progress forward. We've played with energy and enthusiasm. Our intensity level has been pretty good."

Reserve LaQuinton Ross continued his strong play, shooting five of 11 from the field on his way to a 13 point, nine rebound outing. Shannon Scott also came off the bench and chipped in, scoring 12 points with three assists, four steals and no turnovers.

“The coaches want me to be more aggressive and be ready to make shots,” Scott said. “I practice making those shots and it feels nice to be able to produce during the game.”

One of the most encouraging performances of the night, though, belonged to Evan Ravenel. The Buckeyes desperately need an inside presence, and Ravenel showed flashes scoring 11 points and grabbing nine rebounds in just 17 minutes of action.

Still, Ravenel remains a work in progress, “I thought [Ravenel] got off to a good start. He gets a little tired but I told him that’s a good thing because he’s playing extremely hard,” Matta said. “That’s ultimately what you relay in terms of being a senior – he assesses the situation and says ‘what do I have to do in order to help this basketball team?’ The more he understands that mode, the better this basketball team will be.”

Ohio State led by just one point after three and a half minutes, but a 9-0 Buckeyes run set the tone for the rest of the game. The Buckeyes did whatever they wanted on offense and went into the locker room at halftime with a 42-18 lead.

Despite a 7-2 spurt to start the second half, Savannah State never seriously threatened the Buckeyes as they cruised to the 40-point rout.

### **Who’s Next?**

The Buckeyes are set to host the UNC-Asheville Bulldogs on Saturday, December 15. The game will tip off at 12:00 p.m. ET and will be televised by the Big Ten Network.

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