



The top-seeded Ohio State Buckeyes thrashed the overmatched UT-San Antonio Roadrunners 75-46 on Friday night, advancing to the third round of the tournament for a matchup against the George Mason Patriots.

The Buckeyes were led by William Buford, who scored a team high 18 points while chipping in six rebounds and five assists. He did all of this despite sitting the last eight minutes of the game, which was getting out of hand when coach Matta pulled him and some of the other starters.

Buford talked about his performance after the game, “My teammates, they were giving me the ball and shots were open, so I was just taking good shots and knocking them down.”

Success was shared for an Ohio State team that set an NCAA Tournament record by assisting on 26 of their 29 made baskets. The previous record of 21 was broken before the starters left the court with eight minutes to play. It was a great overall performance from the Buckeyes as they shot a blistering 55% from the field (29-52) while connecting on 12 of their 24 3-pointers.

“I think we really did a good job of moving the ball,” senior Jon Diebler said. “[We’re] very unselfish. That’s how we’ve been playing all year, and that’s how we plan on playing the rest of

the year.”

The 26 assists spread the points across Ohio State’s roster as Diebler scored 14, Deshaun Thomas had 13 and Sullinger had 11 (and nine rebounds) in addition to Buford’s 18. David Lighty, a Cleveland native playing with a huge section of family and friends sitting in the crowd, chipped in eight points and five assists.

The Buckeyes defense was equally good, especially in the second half where they held the Roadrunners to just 26% from the field (on 8-31 shooting). Ohio State forced 13 UTSA turnovers and outrebounded the Roadrunners 35-26.

“We wanted to send a message out today and let people know we’re here to take care of business and not play around,” Buford said.

A message was clearly sent -- especially in a game that made the opposing coach, UTSA’s coach Brooks Thompson, say “I’m glad that’s over,” when he met Thad Matta for the postgame handshake.

In his post game press conference, Thompson elaborated on his thoughts of the game, “Wow, they’re good. We all knew that. We knew coming into it how good they were.” He later talked about his team and the way they played, “I was proud of them. They did a nice job and they played maybe the eventual national champion today.”

The first half started in a much different tone as the Roadrunners hit four of their first five shots while taking a 9-6 lead. But from that point on it was all Ohio State as the Buckeyes couldn’t miss, hitting 15 of their first 21 shots. In the closing minutes of the first half, Ohio State scored 11 unanswered points before UTSA’s Devin Gibson hit a shot that beat the buzzer. As the teams went into the locker room, the Buckeyes had a 37-21 lead and all the momentum.

The first possession of the second half foreshadowed how the final 20 minutes would play out as the Roadrunners turned the ball over in just one second. The Buckeyes dominated the rest of the game, suffocating UTSA on defense while operating crisply on offense. The Buckeyes

had a particular stretch in the second half where they outscored the Roadrunners 33-6. Ohio State's bench, which usually only runs 2 deep, expanded as 10 total Buckeyes saw action. When it was all said and done, Ohio State's reserves outscored UTSA's bench 20-2.

With the dominating performance, someone asked Lighty if the Buckeyes were unbeatable if they played to their potential, "Well, I don't know about unbeatable," Lighty said. "But it's awful hard to beat us when the offensive weapons that we have are all clicking at the same time."

Who's Next?

The Ohio State Buckeyes will face the George Mason Patriots in the third round of the NCAA tournament on Sunday, March 20. The game will tip off at 5:15 PM EST and will be televised by TNT.