



Jared Sullinger had to sit out of the game against Texas Pan-American, suffering back spasms after Ohio State's rout of Duke on Tuesday night. The No. 2 Ohio State Buckeyes (8-0) didn't need him, beating the Broncos handedly 64-35 Saturday afternoon.

Deshaun Thomas and Evan Ravenel both scored 11 points, the only Ohio State players who reached double digits in a sluggishly paced game that featured zero fast-break points from either team. The Broncos might be the worst team on Ohio State's schedule this year, but the offense struggled without Sullinger as the Buckeyes shot just 39% from the field.

"We came out with great energy on the defensive end, but for some reason we weren't able to put the ball in the basket when we wanted to," Ohio State coach Thad Matta said. "We missed three point-blank lay-ups, and it catapulted itself into poor game shooting."

Almost everyone struggled to put the ball in the basket against Texas Pan-Am. Leading scorer Deshaun Thomas was just 5-13 on field goal attempts after his big performance against Duke as the starters combined to hit just 36% of their shots. Even William Buford, Ohio State's second leading scorer, had his worst game of the season -- scoring just three points on 1-7 shooting.

"[Buford] might have been frustrated a little bit," Aaron Craft said after the game. "I think he did a good job of going through the storm and saying 'tonight's not my night, so I'm going to help everyone else.'"

The poor offensive outing may have been a result of Jared Sullinger's absence. The leading

scorer and rebounder on the team missed the first game of his career with back spasms, an injury that some have reported would take up to four weeks to recover from. "Dr. Thad" seemed to disagree.

"I think once we get past this, it will be over," Matta said. "Therapy and stretching can strengthen that area over time. I made the decision not to play him today this past Wednesday. I wanted to give him time to rest knowing we would have another week in between games."

Depending on the severity of the spasms, recovery time can be anywhere from one to six weeks. Matta however, is optimistic. "There is a decent chance he can play against Kansas, so we'll reevaluate him and see how he is doing."

Luckily, Ohio State gets a week off before their next game on the schedule -- the huge matchup that Matta referenced against Kansas. With Sullinger inactive since the day after the Duke game, that will give him just over a week and a half to recover. Hopefully for the Buckeyes, that will give him enough time to get healthy and back in the lineup. They'll need him, and a better effort from the other players, to take down the 14th ranked Kansas Jayhawks next Saturday.

Quick Hits:

- Ohio State's victory over Texas Pan-American was victory number 300 for Thad Matta during his coaching career.
- Ohio State pushed the nation's third longest home-winning streak to 30 with Saturday's victory. The Buckeyes are 45-1 at home since the 2009-2010 season.
- Over the last 61 games, the Buckeyes are 56-5, with the only losses coming from Kentucky, Purdue (twice), Wisconsin, and Tennessee -- dating back to March, 2010.

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