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Husker Men Lose at Northwestern

Bo Spencer had a team-high 24 points, as Nebraska trimmed a 15-point halftime deficit to one, but the Huskers were unable to complete the comeback, falling 84-74 to Northwestern Thursday evening.

Spencer led three Huskers in double figures, as he scored 20 of his 24 points in the second half, as Nebraska pulled to within 54-53 with 10:38 left, but could not slow down Northwestern's shooting from long range at key points of the night.

The Wildcats (13-8, 3-6 Big Ten) went 14-of-31 from beyond the arc, as John Shurna and Drew Crawford combined for 49 points in the victory. Shurna was 9-of-13 from the floor, including a trio of 3-pointers, while Crawford finished with 21 points, including a game-high four 3-pointers.

Crawford and Shurna came up big in the second half, scoring six straight points in a 9-0 spurt to give the hosts some breathing room. Crawford hit a 3-pointer to make it 57-53 before Shurna got an offensive rebound and tossed it in as part of a 3-point play to make it 60-53. On Northwestern's next possession, Reggie Hearn's 3-pointer capped the 9-0 spurt, as the Wildcats rebuilt their double-figure lead to 63-53 with 9:18 left.

Bo Spencer led three Huskers (11-10, 3-7 Big Ten) in double figures with 24 points for his sixth 20-point game of the season. Toney McCray added 16 points and five rebounds, while Dylan Talley added 13 points off the bench, as the Huskers shot 52 percent from the floor in a losing effort.

In the first half, the Wildcats used sharp shooting from outside, hitting 10-of-21 from 3-point range in building a 41-25 halftime lead. Shurna had a trio of 3-pointers en route to 13 first-half points, while all five Wildcat starters hit at least one shot from long range in the opening 20 minutes.

Nebraska fell behind 6-0, but used an 8-3 run of their own to pull within 9-8 after a McCray 3-pointer. The senior had six early points for the Huskers and had eight points in the first half.

Northwestern led 12-8 after a Shurna 3-pointer, but Nebraska used a 5-0 run to take the lead as a 3-pointer by Talley and a layup by Diaz gave the Huskers their first lead of the night at 13-12. Shurna then put the Wildcats ahead 14-13 with a driving basket off the glass. The teams traded the lead until Talley's 3-pointer at the 9:38 mark put the Huskers up 21-19.

Nebraska pulled to within 24-23 after a Jorge Brian Diaz basket, but the Wildcats used a 9-0 run, including a pair of Dave Sololewski 3-pointers, to take a 34-25 lead after a Sobolewski 3-pointer. The Huskers went nearly 5:30 without a field goal until Toney McCray's basket ended the drought. Drew Crawford's 3-pointer started a 7-1 run to close the first half, as Sobolewski was fouled on a 3-pointer with 0.2 seconds left. The freshman guard hit all three foul shots to give the Wildcats a 15-point halftime lead.

Sobolewski was the third Wildcat in double figures, as he finished with 15 points and five assists.

The Huskers came out of the blocks quickly in the second half, hitting four of its first five shots from the floor in a 12-1 to pull within 42-38 and force a Wildcat timeout. Caleb Walker had two quick baskets to get the Huskers going before Spencer capped the run with five straight points, including a

3-pointer from the corner to make it a four-point game with 16:05 left.

Nebraska trailed 49-41 after a Sobolewski 3-pointer, but fought right back as a McCray 3-pointer and a Walker layup made 49-46. Nebraska continued to chip away, hitting seven straight shots at one point, pulling within 54-53 after a Richardson steal and layup with 10:38 remaining.

Northwestern then scored nine straight points and led 73-61 after a Crawford basket before Nebraska made one last run. A Ubel put back and a three-point play by Spencer pulled the Huskers within 73-66 with 3:04 remaining. Shurna hit a pair of free throws to make it 75-66, but consecutive 3-pointers from Talley and Spencer made it 75-72 with 1:34 left.

That would be as close as the Huskers would get, as Shurna's leaner off the glass made it 77-72 before Sobolewski hit 3-of-4 from the line in the final minute to extend the lead to 80-72 and NU could not recover.

The Huskers return to action on Sunday afternoon, as they host Minnesota at Noon (central).