

No. 15 Buckeyes Roll Past No. 13 California, 76-70

[box score](#)

NEW YORK (AP) – Ohio State's two-game visit to Madison Square Garden may have been inconsistent at times. The Buckeyes' best player, however, has been consistent all season.

Evan Turner had 26 points and 14 rebounds, his fourth double-double in as many games, and No. 15 Ohio State beat No. 13 California 76-70 on Friday night in the third-place game of the 2K Sports Classic.

The Buckeyes (3-1) went through an opposite experience from their 77-73 loss to No. 6 North Carolina in the semifinals of the tournament that benefits Coaches vs. Cancer.

Ohio State trailed by 19 points in the second half against the Tar Heels and was able to finally start hitting from long range and get within two in the final seconds.

Against the Golden Bears (2-2), the Buckeyes used a 21-3 run spanning halftime to take a 52-28 lead with 15:40 to play. California answered right away with a 17-4 run - two of Ohio State's points came on a technical foul against Cal coach Mike Montgomery - to get within single digits with 11:28 to go.

The Bears took advantage of Ohio State suddenly having trouble taking care of the ball to get within 63-57 with 5:09 left. But Turner, who had 23 points, 11 rebounds and 10 turnovers against North Carolina, scored eight of the Buckeyes' next 10 points.

"He is a guy we have to lean on at times to kind of carry us through," Ohio State coach Thad Matta said. "I was very pleased with the way he was finishing for us down the stretch."

Turner became the first Ohio State player to have four straight double-doubles since Terence Dials had five in a row in February 2006 on his way to being Big Ten player of the year.

Turner doesn't want to hear about anything other than winning.

"It was a great win for the team and a great win for the program and it gives us good momentum," he said. "It has been a good stretch of games. I am just trying to play hard.

"It turned into a game. Basketball is a game of runs. Fortunately we are mature enough to keep a lead. We handled what we had to handle and we took care of business."

Jon Diebler added 14 points for Ohio State and Dallas Lauderdale, who is coming off an injury to his right hand, had eight points and seven blocked shots.

"Dallas has been inching his way back in," Matta said of the 6-8, 255-pound center. "This has been good having two games here. He gives us a different look both offensively and defensively."

Jerome Randle had 26 points for California, one more than he had in the 95-73 loss to Syracuse in the semifinals. He was 6 of 12 from 3-point range.

"We have to step up," Randle said. "They just came out and attacked us. I think our effort this game was way better than last game so I am happy about that."

Turner, who opened the season with a triple-double against Alcorn State, had six assists and four turnovers.

The Buckeyes led 38-25 at halftime behind a long-range shooting performance that was a world away from the first half against North Carolina.

Against the Tar Heels, the Buckeyes missed their first nine 3-point attempts and North Carolina took advantage to build a 14-point halftime lead. Ohio State finally started hitting from the outside late before running out of time.

Against the Golden Bears, Ohio State made five of 11 3-point attempts and was able to close the half with a 7-

0 run - started with a 3 by William Buford - for the 13-point lead.

Randle hit a 3 to open the second half, but the Buckeyes went on a 14-0 run as the Bears missed eight straight shots.

"They made a run, they knocked us on our heels," Matta said. "They would not go away. They turned the pressure up a little bit. All of a sudden we lost our composure in a lot of different ways especially on the defensive end and that let them in the game."

Montgomery was able to find some positives in the trip.

"We definitely played harder in the second half instead of letting them do onto us," he said. "When that happens you are going to give yourself chances, at least to compete, which I thought we did."