

Huskers Season Ends in First Round of Big 10 Tourney

A big surge by Purdue midway through the first half proved to be too much to overcome for Nebraska in a 79-61 loss at its first-ever game in the Big Ten Men's Basketball Tournament on Thursday night at Bankers Life Fieldhouse in Indianapolis.

Senior guard Bo Spencer paced the Huskers with 22 points, including 14 before halftime. Toney McCray and Dylan Talley also reached double figures with 13 and 10 points, respectively, in the game.

Nebraska got off to a strong start, jumping to a 12-8 lead at the 14:40 mark of the first half, but the Huskers then went through a scoring drought of nearly eight minutes. Purdue went on a 17-0 run in the same time span to take a 13-point advantage with just less than seven minutes remaining before halftime.

Purdue never trailed after that point in the contest, but Nebraska continued to battle the Boilermakers throughout, moving as close as four points early in the second half. The Huskers trailed by 12 points at 37-25 with 1:12 left in the first half, but scored six of the final eight points before intermission to slice the halftime margin to 39-31.

NU scored the first four points after halftime to move within four at 39-35, and remained within six points with 15 minutes remaining. However, the Huskers could get no closer as Purdue continued to blister the nets from three-point range, and put the contest out of reach with a 10-0 run to take a 67-48 lead.

With the loss, Nebraska completed its 2011-12 season with a 12-18 record. Thursday's loss was the final game in a Husker uniform for seniors McCray, Spencer, Brandon Richardson, and Caleb Walker.

With the victory, Purdue advances to face third-seeded Ohio State in Friday evening's quarterfinals