

# Buckeyes Look To Continue Win Streak On Wednesday Against Miami (Ohio)



Ohio State is coming off a statement 84-74 victory over Minnesota in its Big Ten opener Sunday night, and it will get another chance to rack up a conference win when they travel to Penn State on Saturday. Before that, however, the Buckeyes will welcome an in-state non-conference foe to Value City Arena on Wednesday in the MAC's Miami (Ohio) a matchup that head coach Chris Holtmann said his team is not overlooking.

"We're playing a team that's been playing really well," Holtmann told the media on Tuesday. "There's obviously some concerns. We need to be ready to go, ready to play."

The Redhawks (4-3), led by second-year head coach and former Xavier assistant Travis Steele, come into Columbus winning four of its last five games after an 0-2 start. Two of those victories have come by more than 30 points, including their 82-43 drubbing of Spalding University on Nov. 28.

Holtmann said he thinks the RedHawks' recent success has come from their efficient offensive scheme, one that has scored 75 points in all four wins and currently ranks seventh in the MAC in scoring (71.7), eighth in team field goal percentage (44.7) and second in team three-point field goal percentage (38.1).

"They have a very skilled group that is difficult (to guard)," Holtmann said. "They're offensive efficiency and effective field goal percentage is really good. And I think that's because of their skill. They're a disciplined group, they're well-coached, and we need to have a readiness to play tomorrow."

Miami (Ohio's) offense, which Holtmann said is predicated on "great spacing and skill," has been led this season by graduate wing Darweshi Hunter, who enters this game averaging a team-high 13.4 points per game on an efficient 42.9 percent shooting. But the Redhawks' offense has been more than just Hunter this season, where they have also seen four players — freshmen guards Evan Ipsaro (9.1) and Mekhi Cooper (8.9), sophomore center Jaquel Morris (8.1) and graduate forward Bryce Bultman (8.0) — averaging at least 8.0 points per game on a combined 50.0 percent shooting.

With Miami (Ohio) possessing a balanced scoring attack — along with a solid defense that currently ranks third in the MAC allowing just 66.5 points per game — Holtmann said his team cannot look forward to their upcoming games against Big Ten and other Power Five schools, as doing so could result in a disappointing upset loss and also an end to their six-game winning streak. This is an approach that the coach said he has tried to ingrain in his player's minds all week leading up to the game, because an inability to do so has tripped up some other teams against inferior opponents through the early portion of the season.

"You're always concerned about (getting his team ready to play) as a coach," Holtmann said. "You don't have to look very far in college basketball. This is a good Miami team. Travis does a great job with them. They're an in-state school, so there's all the motivation there. We need to have great preparation. But yeah, absolutely. I think your antenna is up as a coach just because of the reality of college basketball right now. Anybody who follows scores and watches scores knows that."

The Buckeyes and Redhawks will tip off at Value City Arena at 7 p.m., with the game set to stream exclusively on Big Ten Plus. Former Ohio State guard and team captain Joey Lane will be on the call as the game's color analyst.