

# Former Gopher Jamison Battle Focused On Bigger Picture Ahead Of Sunday's Game Against Minnesota



Ohio State fifth-year forward Jamison Battle will be facing off against some familiar faces on Sunday night when the Buckeyes welcome Minnesota to Value City Arena for their Big Ten opener, a program that the veteran wing spent two seasons with prior to transferring to head coach Chris Holtmann's team this offseason.

Battle called Minnesota home from 2021-2023 and averaged 15.1 points and 5.1 rebounds per game in 56 games (all starts) with the program. The forward said on a Zoom call on Friday that he has fond memories while playing for head coach Ben Johnson, but he also made it clear that his mindset heading into the game is less about himself and more about the team's overall game-plan.

"You obviously have thoughts about (playing against your old team)," Battle said. "But it's just the first Big Ten game of the season, that's how we're looking at it. As a team, we have some things we need to improve on from the Central Michigan game and from games prior. And we're really looking forward to opening the Big Ten season at home and then playing a pretty solid Minnesota team.

"For me, I obviously know a lot of the guys and I've been watching their games," he continued. "So it's exciting. We're brothers off the court. But then once we get on that court, it's going to be a battle out there."

Battle added that he has moved on from his time in Minnesota and embraced his next chapter in Columbus, something that he said has made prepping for his old team more "normal." This is a feeling Battle thinks is mutual, as it is something he talked about with his former teammates before departing for Columbus.

"I would say it's pretty normal," Battle said. "Obviously, you have your times with those guys, you have

your time with the former team, but you move on, and I've moved on to a different team. So I'm looking at it as, 'How can we, as a team, go out here and win this game?'

"You have those guys and you have the coaching staff that you know and have been with for two years. But in the end, you have to focus on what your team needs to do. And that's what I'm completely focused on. Yes, I'm playing my old team, it's just another Big Ten game."

Despite the focused mentality, Battle said he has still found time to keep in touch with some of his former Minnesota teammates, specifically citing forwards Dawson Garcia, Parker Fox and Isaiah Inhen. But he thinks those relationships will evaporate when the two teams take the court on Sunday, when his former teammates will turn into his rivals.

"I know a lot of those guys out there, so it will be fun to compete against them out on the court," Battle said. "But I talked about it with these guys beforehand when I did transfer, that we're brothers off the court, and then on the court, we're rivals. And I think that's something that we're all looking forward to, and I just can't wait to go out there and play the game."