

Hear From Ohio State Head Coach Chris Holtmann



Just more than 24 hours away from the debut of the 2019-20 Ohio State men's basketball team, head coach Chris Holtmann spoke to members of the media.

The Buckeyes take on Cedarville in an exhibition at Value City Arena at 7:00 p.m., one week before their Nov. 6 season opener against Cincinnati in the same venue.

- Excited about second exhibition (Buckeyes held private scrimmage against Louisville) and to play against somebody other than themselves before facing "a really good Cincinnati team."
- "We always want to play Ohio schools in this exhibition." We'll typically play one, and it will be a different one every year.
- Cedarville head coach Pat Estep said the school sold 1,500 tickets for the game in less than an hour. Ohio State gave at least 1,000 more tickets to Cedarville after that.
- Everyone is healthy other than Musa Jallow, who is without a timetable to return following arthroscopic surgery on his ankle. The junior guard uses a scooter to get around, with his right foot in a walking boot.
- We're trying to prepare our team for more than we did in the Louisville scrimmage in terms of pregame scouting. But it won't be to the extent it will be for the matchup with Cincinnati.
- I'm really excited to see how our freshmen respond to playing in front of a crowd for the first time as Buckeyes.
- Biggest thing we're looking for is how committed our guys are to playing the way we want to play on both ends.
- Limiting turnovers will be a huge emphasis. With deep rotation and playing a lot of youth, turnovers are expected to be a concern.
- Where do you want to move Kaleb Wesson around offensively? The perimeter. Moving him around is going to be critical. "It's really hard against really good defensive teams to just shove the ball down into the post, and it puts a lot of stress on your offense." We're going to move him around and emphasize his passing and shooting from the outside.

- Rankings? "I've never in my career talked about preseason rankings, not once."... "They're based on things that your group in its entirety has not actually accomplished." Not going to talk about it. Even players nowadays understand that it's relatively meaningless.
- Effects of 3-point line moving back? Probably a slight dip in percentage. Poorer shooters may be more reluctant. Guys who use their legs more, like Luther Muhammad, may be affected more. That will be a thing to watch.
- No starting five yet, expecting it to be fluid.
- NCAA student-athletes receiving compensation off their image and likeness? "I like it." It was just a matter of time. It's a good idea. How it works and how you make it work, there's a lot that goes into it, but I'm glad that this is a good step.
- Where are you with turnovers and protecting possessions? "We're not where we need to be. We had 19 turnovers with 12 assists against Louisville.
- "Our sophomore guards are growing into some really important roles, and I think that's going to determine a lot about our season."
- E.J. Liddell's shape and conditioning? It's improved but it's not where it needs to be moving forward.
- Any season-starting rituals? Not other than going to CVS to get my supply of Tylenol PM. Talked with my daughter, 9, about maybe starting a tradition of wearing a jersey on the day of the first game.
- Seeing our guys in real competitive situations is what I'm most excited about. Also, how do our older guys lead in the really challenging early stretch of the season?

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