

Hear From Ohio State Men's Basketball Coach Chris Holtmann



Just over 30 hours away from the season-opening tipoff against Cincinnati at Value City Arena, Ohio State head coach Chris Holtmann spoke to members of the media.

- Jarron Cumberland is a very talented returning player.
- Adding a veteran point guard (Chris McNeil), a 7-footer (Jaume “Jay” Sorolla) and Jaevin Cumberland (Jarron’s cousin) makes Cincinnati more challenging and experienced.
- How all of the new players will mesh in a new system is difficult to predict with so many new faces coming together for the Bearcats under first-year coach John Brannen.
- What are you anxious about? A lot. Cincinnati is going to be solid in the paint with excellent rebounding. There are going to be unknowns going into this. They probably have more to prepare for than us.
- The hardest thing for young, talented players to realize is how hard it is to be good for a long time consistently. What talented players have to see early on is that they’re going to be held accountable.
- You’re coaching everybody differently because they’re different people.
- Conversations with players are transparent, such as those regarding an early entry into the NBA draft.
- Players are at their best when they’re firmly planted and present where their feet are.
- Roster stability is a part of adding transfers to the program. We won’t just take transfers to take them; Justice Sueing is a good player.
- Cincinnati will probably attack Kaleb Wesson and try to get him into foul trouble early. We’ve sat down with Kaleb and coached him on how to get better in that area. He’s big and aggressive, so he will not go 35 games without getting into foul trouble. The added fitness will help that.
- Assessing point guards defensively? C.J. Walker, naturally, understands our system at a really high level. With D.J. Carton, it’s a continual learning process, but I’ve been pleased with his willingness to compete on that end.

- C.J. Walker has always impacted the game, not just on offense, but overall as a player.
- We will not compromise on a lack of effort defensively. A willing spirit is essential on defense.
- Good to be tested so early in the season? "We'll see. I would say yes right now; we'll see after a couple of months." Reluctant because of a such young team.
- Chemistry is important between point guards and post players, as well as with the entire team.
- Always want to play Ohio schools. I always had a ton of respect for Tom Crean at Indiana because there is risk in playing smaller in-state schools. But who wants to live a risk-free life?
- Luther Muhammad played within himself during the exhibition. He did some good things in limited actions. He'll score the ball for us this year, but he needs to be an efficient offensive player.
- The starting lineup will be somewhat fluid this year. It will be set on a game-to-game basis.

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