

Men's Volleyball: Ohio State To Play For MIVA Tournament Championship Saturday



After claiming a share of the Midwestern Intercollegiate Volleyball Association regular season conference championship, the Ohio State men's volleyball team will look to add additional hardware on Saturday in the MIVA Tournament Championship against top-seeded Ball State at 7 p.m.

It's been a resurgent season for the Buckeyes under head coach Kevin Burch, with Ohio State claiming a 19-9 record after finishing below .500 in the last two seasons. Ohio State's improved play led the Buckeyes to an 11-3 mark in conference play and a share of the MIVA regular season title, the program's first since 2018.

After the much-improved regular season, Ohio State earned the No. 3 seed in the MIVA Tournament and held the opportunity to host sixth-seeded Lindenwood on April 15 at the Covelli Center. The Buckeyes made swift work of the Lions, sweeping Lindenwood 3-0 on the back of 17 kills and eight digs from freshman opposite hitter Shane Wetzel. Junior outside hitter Jacob Pasteur, Ohio State's leader in kills with 413 on the season, added 14 kills in the win.

Ohio State also received some help en route to the MIVA Conference Championship. Second-seeded Loyola Chicago was stunned by seventh-seeded McKendree 3-2 on April 15, giving the Buckeyes a favorable matchup, and an additional home game, in the second round. OSU took full advantage of the circumstances, rolling past the Bearcats 3-1 on April 19. Wetzel again led the Buckeyes with 19 kills, tying a career-high, while junior libero Thomas Poole led the way with 11 digs.

The Buckeyes will be tasked with vanquishing a Ball State squad that hasn't lost a set since April 1, with the Cardinals sweeping in their last four matches, including its two conference tournament wins over Quincy and Lewis. The Cardinals are eyeing their second consecutive MIVA Tournament title and are led by the outside hitting duo of Kaleb Jenness and Tinaishe Ndavazocheva, who were both named to the All-MIVA First Team.

Ohio State will also need to shake off the road environment, with the game being played at Ball State's Worthen Arena. The game will be streamed on ESPN+.