

Ohio State Accepts NIT Bid As No. 2 Seed, Will Host Cornell In First Round



Ohio State has accepted a bid to the 2024 National Invitation Tournament, or NIT, and earned a No. 2 seed in the 32-team bracket revealed Sunday night. The Buckeyes will host Cornell in the first round of the invitational on Tuesday night, with tip off set for 7p.m. on ESPN2.

□Let's play some more basketball, shall we?

We've officially accepted an invite to the NIT and will enter as a #2 seed, hosting the Cornell Big Red in the first round. @NITMBB | #GoBucks pic.twitter.com/daZagBCTWj

— Ohio State Hoops □ (@OhioStateHoops) March 18, 2024

Ohio State (20-13, 9-11 in Big Ten), winners of six of its last eight games under now-full-time head coach Jake Diebler — who reached a five-year deal to become the program's leader on Sunday — earned an automatic bid to the tournament due to the new NIT rules set by the NCAA, which guarantees that the top two top teams in the NET rankings who do not qualify for the NCAA Tournament from each conference will be selected. The Buckeyes are currently 49th in the NET rankings, the highest ranking for a Big Ten team not selected in the NCAA Tournament, and even higher than Northwestern, who earned a No. 9 seed in the Big Dance.

The Buckeyes are set to face off against a Cornell team who enters the invitational with a 22-7 overall record and 11-3 mark in the Ivy League. The Big Red, who are coached by eight-year head coach Brian Earl, are led on the court by senior and junior guards Chris Manon and Nazir Williams, who average 12.5 and 11.4 points per game, respectively, on a combined 50.1 percent shooting.

This will be the first matchup between the two teams in 55 years, with the last meeting occurring on Jan. 24, 1969, a 96-78 Ohio State win. The Buckeyes hold a 5-3 record against the Big Red in their eight all-time meetings, with the first matchup occurring in 1920, a 23-22 Buckeyes victory.

Ohio State is also participating in the NIT for the 10th time in program history and the first time since 2016. The Buckeyes, who own a 19-8 overall record in the tournament, have won the invitational two times in their history, securing championships in both 1986 and 2008. They were also a runner-up in 1988, when the Gary Williams and Jay Burson-led Buckeyes lost to St. John's in overtime at St. John

Arena.

The Buckeyes' pursuit for a third NIT championship will begin at Value City Arena. If Ohio State gets past Cornell, it will host another game in the second round of the tournament against either No. 3 seed Virginia Tech or Richmond, with that matchup taking place on either March 23 or 24. No. 1 seeded Wake Forest and Appalachian State are also featured in Ohio State's portion of the bracket.

The tournament will continue through the quarterfinals (March 26-27) before heading to Butler's historic Hinkle Fieldhouse in Indianapolis for the semifinals (April 2) and championship (April 4). The championship game is set for April 4 at 7 p.m. on ESPN.

For a full look at the NIT bracket and first-round tip-times, visit [here](#).