

Ohio State Head Coach Jake Diebler Trying To Establish Fast-Paced, High-Energy Culture In Practice



In his first year leading the men's basketball program as head coach, Jake Diebler has broken down the offseason into three different phases, each of which he feels his team needs to complete before they begin the 2024-25 season against Texas in Las Vegas on Nov. 4.

According to the coach, the Buckeyes are in the middle of phase two of the offseason, which Diebler said revolves around "growth," something that can be accomplished during the team's fall practice, which officially began on Monday.

"We've laid a great foundation about playing the way we want to play, and now we have to get detailed and really start to get better at some things leading into what will be phase three for us, which will be some specific prep for some of our exhibition games and our first game Nov. 4," Diebler said to a contingent of local media in the Schottenstein Center interview room before taking the floor for his first official fall practice.

For Diebler, that foundation comes with playing with great pace and urgency, a mentality on the court that he has attempted to instill in his team since he took over interim head coaching duties at the end of last season.

In their first practice open to the media, the pace and intensity of practice was palpable.

Diebler and his staff were actively participating in team drills, with the 37-year-old head coach working up a sweat while serving as a high-energy defender who would physically contest his players' shots at the rim as well as a guard who dribbled to the rim in an effort to teach his group how to stay in front of their man.

Ohio State's team managers were standing on the sidelines constantly clapping and cheering during drills. The team took little to no break throughout the approximately 30 minutes the media were allowed to see practice.

Although it was just day one, Diebler's Buckeyes are establishing a clear identity practice. It is one the head coach is hoping can translate onto the court come Nov. 4, and reach the standard set by those who came before him in the Scarlet and Gray.

"As a program, we have expectations, and we need to compete for those expectations," Diebler said. "There's a standard in this program, traditionally, that we have not shied away from. You don't get there by just talking about it. You have to recruit to it. You have to practice for it and all that. So I don't know how long that's going to take, but we're trying to get there as quickly as we possibly can.

"I want our former players and the people who have come before us to be really proud of the way we play. "With a toughness, with an urgency, with a togetherness, that when people turn on the TV, or they come to the (Schottenstein Center) to watch us, especially our former players, they look out there and are like, 'Those guys are representing us well.' That's important to me."