

Ohio State Hires Katie Smith, Jacy Sheldon To Women's Basketball Staff



Ohio State is bringing back two all-time Buckeyes to join Kevin McGuff's coaching staff for the 2024-25 season, hiring on Monday former All-American guards Katie Smith and Jacy Sheldon to serve as assistant coach and director of player development, respectively.

"I'm extremely excited to add both Jacy and Katie to the staff," McGuff said in a statement released Monday. "As former Buckeyes they both possess a passion for this program that will be instrumental in helping us continue to compete at the highest level of women's college basketball. Together they will have a big presence in the community as we proceed with growing our already incredible fan base."

Smith, a three-time All-Big Ten guard at Ohio State (1992-96) and Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Famer, returns to Columbus after 11 seasons coaching in the WNBA. She spent the past five seasons with the Minnesota Lynx, where she had served as the team's associate head coach since 2022. She helped guide Minnesota to a 30-10 record and an appearance in the WNBA Finals this season, where they fell in five games to the New York Liberty.

At Ohio State, Smith became one of the best players to don the Scarlet and Gray uniform, scoring 2,578 career points — a program-best mark she held for decades until Kelsey Mitchell broke it — and helping guide the Buckeyes to a Big Ten Championship and national title game appearance as just a freshman in 1992-93.

She then translated those successes into an even better WNBA career, where she was a two-time All-WNBA first-team selection and two-time WNBA Champion for the Detroit Shock, taking home Finals MVP after its win in 2008.

She totaled 6,452 points across her 16-year WNBA career, which ranks 11th all-time.

"I'm both excited and grateful to return to my alma mater, Ohio State, and to the city my family and I proudly call home," Smith said in a statement. "Ohio State and its women's basketball program played such a pivotal role in my journey and I am honored to have the opportunity to give back to the program that helped shape me. I look forward to joining Coach McGuff and the entire staff in guiding and

supporting these talented young women as they chase their dreams. Together, we're committed to building on Ohio State's proud legacy and taking our program to championship levels in a fiercely competitive Big Ten. I can't wait to see and connect with the Buckeye community - around town and at our games. Go Bucks!"

Sheldon, on the other hand, joins Ohio State's staff just one year removed from her playing days with the Buckeyes, where she turned in one of the more successful seasons in program history from 2019-24. She finished her career as one of just three Buckeyes who totaled 1,900 points, 400 rebounds, 350 assists, 200 steals and 150 made triples across their Buckeye career.

Her 2,024 career points rank sixth all-time in program history, a mark that helped her earn three All-Big Ten selections and a second-team All-American nod her senior year in 2023-24.

Sheldon also helped lead the Buckeyes to some great team success, helping McGuff's team secure four 20+-win seasons in her five years with the program, including a 28-8 mark in 2022-23 where she helped the team return to their first Elite Eight since 1992-93.

Sheldon's Ohio State career allowed her to be drafted by the WNBA's Dallas Wings with the ninth overall selection in last year's draft, where she averaged 5.4 points, 2.5 rebounds and 2.1 assists across 40 games for the franchise her rookie season, including 26 starts.

Sheldon will still play for the Wings next year and will likely only be with the Buckeyes during the WNBA offseason, but while with the Buckeyes she will "play a pivotal role in enhancing student-athlete growth both on and off the court" by working closely with the staff to "develop and implement comprehensive, individualized player development plans."

"I'm so excited to have the opportunity to contribute to a program that did so much for me as a player and a person," Sheldon said. "As someone who has so much love and respect for this university and this program, I'm grateful to be around this program beyond my playing years."

McGuff, Smith and Sheldon will all speak to the media at Value City Arena around 2 p.m. Monday afternoon, and Buckeye Sports Bulletin will offer updates of all pertinent information from the availability.