

Ohio State Hoping To Take Lessons From Duke Loss Into Next Season



Ohio State's season came to a disappointing end on Sunday with an upset loss to Duke in the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament, leaving the Buckeyes searching for answers when it expected to be playing at least into next weekend.

The focus now shifts to next season, and for junior guard Taylor Thierry, she said the Buckeyes will need to focus on righting the wrongs that led to them dropping three of their final four games of this campaign.

"Definitely just learn from these mistakes and to take advantage of these opportunities that we have, and just move on," she said.

Most of those deficiencies late in the season came from rebounding, where the Buckeyes faced deficits of 55-31 against Maryland and 38-20 against Duke on the boards. While Ohio State had no shortage of players willing to go up for a rebound, the Buckeyes faced a height disadvantage in most contests this season, and head coach Kevin McGuff said addressing that issue will be a focus this offseason.

"I think part of it is we just have to pay attention to personnel and who we're bringing in and adding to the group that we'll have coming back," he said. "That's probably the biggest thing, and hopefully we can add some people that can help us in that area."

Thierry, expected to be a leader on next year's team along with sophomore forward Cotie McMahan, agreed that rebounding was a concern for Ohio State this season, and echoed McGuff in that it will be a focus this offseason.

"It seems like rebounding is a huge issue for this team for some games, and it was prevalent in this game," Thierry said. "But we just need to focus on getting offensive rebounds, defensive rebounds, and not letting the (other) team get more rebounds than us, because that's how a lot of our fouls came in.

"A lot of people had four or five fouls at the end of the game, so we just have to work on rebounding,

especially as we move forward to next year.”

It will be a new-look Ohio State team next season, with the Buckeyes losing guards Jacy Sheldon and Celeste Taylor and forward Rebeka Mikulášiková, among others, but Sheldon said she is excited to see how the Buckeyes move forward next season.

“I’m excited for them,” she said. “A lot of girls I played with, too, so I’ll still be in contact with them and following them. I’m excited to see what they do. They’re a special group. I don’t know who’s coming in, but I’m sure that it’ll help them out, too. I’m really excited for all of them.”