

Ohio State Wrestling Announces Non-Conference Schedule



Ohio State wrestling will look a little more normal this season.

The Buckeyes will square off with three Atlantic Coast opponents as part of its non-conference schedule, the program announced on Wednesday. Ohio State will host North Carolina and Pittsburgh and travel to Blacksburg, Va. to dual with Virginia Tech.

Ohio State will also compete with Notre Dame College — a division two school located in Cleveland — at the Covelli Center. It will also take part in the Ohio Intercollegiate Open and the Cliff Keen Las Vegas Invitational.

The Big Ten schedule will include four home and four away meets this season. The Buckeyes will have seven competitions in Columbus, five on the road, and two opens or invitational during the regular season.

Ohio State faces North Carolina on Nov. 7 for its first dual. The matchup brings together Austin O’Conner and Sammy Sasso. The 149-pound wrestlers met in the NCAA Championship final last season, with O’Conner winning the bout in a 3-2 decision after Sasso’s final reach for a takedown in the closing seconds fell short.

After traveling to the Ohio Intercollegiate Open, Ohio State will wear the gray singlets again against Virginia Tech. The schools last met in 2017, when the Hokies upset the No. 3-ranked Buckeyes 21-15 in Columbus. A lot has changed in four seasons, but Virginia Tech remains a formidable force in their conference and will be a challenging opponent for Ohio State this season.

Ohio State will host Pittsburgh in its final dual of the non-conference schedule. Pittsburgh head coach Keith Gavin and volunteer assistant Luke Pletcher wrestled in Columbus under Ohio State head coach Tom Ryan. Gavin trained at the Ohio Regional Training Center, and Pletcher competed for the Buckeyes as a four-year starter.

In an all-Big Ten schedule last season, Ohio State finished 5-4 and claimed ninth place at the Big Ten Championships — the program’s lowest finish since it placed eighth in a decade.

While the Buckeyes did not achieve their goal of winning the conference and a national title, they will return a plethora of starters for the 2021-2022 season.

Malik Heinselman (125), Jordan Decatur (133), Anthony Echemendia (141), Dylan D'Emilio (141), Ethan Smith (165), Kaleb Romero (174), Rocky Jordan (184), Gavin Hoffman (197), Tate Orndorff (HWT) and Sasso all made more than one start for Ohio State last year.

Carson Kharchla will make his debut for the Buckeyes after recovering from a torn ACL he suffered during winter training. The Powell (Ohio) Olentangy Liberty product came to Ohio State as one of the top recruits in the country and figures to make a big contribution in the 165-pound weight class.

Paddy Gallagher comes to campus this fall after putting together a dominant high school career at Chesterland (Ohio) St. Edward where was selected the No. 1 pound-for-pound wrestler in the 2021 class by MatScouts and FloWrestling.

Ryan enters his 16th season as head coach of the Buckeyes. Under his tenure, Ohio State is 280-139-1 (.668) in duals. The team has also won three Big Ten Championships and claimed the 2015 NCAA Championship. He will look to give the program another title this season after finishing runner-up in three of the last four championship tournaments.