

Tanner Holden Ready For Jump To The Big Ten



Tanner Holden became a household name during the First Four of the 2021 NCAA Tournament, aiding the Wright State Raiders to a 93-82 victory over Bryant while producing 37 points and 11 rebounds en route to the win.

While Holden's NCAA Tournament outing thrust him into the national spotlight, it was just another night for the Wheelersburg, Ohio, native — who posted averages of 20.1 points, 7.1 rebounds and 2.6 assists per game in his junior season with the Raiders. Although Holden showcased his scoring talent while with Wright State, he noted that his role with the Buckeyes will be much different.

"I'm not going to score 20 a game. I was happy to do it last year, that was a big accomplishment for me," Holden said on Sept. 26. "Overall, I knew I wasn't going to be able to just step into that role and just score 20 a game, not a lot of people can do that. E.J. (Liddell) was able to score 19 a game last year and he's a great player.

"We have a lot of great players here this year," he continued. "We're going to be able to spread the wealth and a lot of people are going to be able to have good games and show out this season."

Holden was a standout in football and basketball at Wheelersburg High School, earning All-Ohio honors in basketball as a senior while contending for the Mr. Football award, placing as a finalist. During his recruitment, Holden was approached by Thad Matta to play at Ohio State, but that notion was flipped on its head when Matta resigned as the Buckeyes' head coach in 2017. Holden ultimately decided to play his collegiate career at Wright State.

While with the Raiders, Holden showcased his durability as he did not miss a single game across his three seasons with the program. Holden posted career averages of 16.1 points, 7.0 rebounds, 2.3 assists and 1.2 steals during his 92 games with Wright State.

With attention to his time with the Raiders, Holden noted that playing in the Horizon League helped him prepare to play against stiffer competition in the Big Ten.

“I feel like I needed that next level of competition,” Holden said. “The Horizon League, Wright State, they helped me advance my game. It’s crazy how much I evolved from my freshman year to my junior year. That’s all credit to (Wright State head coach Scott Nagy), (assistant coach Clint Sargent), and all the players there for helping me out.

“When I entered my name in the portal, there were a lot of things that went into it. I went back for a whole week and talked to my family about it,” he added. “Overall, I just felt that this was the best decision for me and being able to land at Ohio State was awesome.”

Holden is one of the 10 new faces on the Ohio State roster in 2022-23, but he feels that the team has built chemistry quickly and is looking forward to showcasing what they can do come November.

“It’ll be a super exciting season,” Holden said. “We’re a really versatile group. We’re a really tight-knit group. I think that’ll carry over onto the court, as well as off of the court. I feel like it’ll be a really fun team, we’re going to play fast and we’re going to do a lot of good things this year.”