

Thornton Lands On All-Tournament Team After Dazzling Display In Chicago



As Ohio State made the deepest run of any No. 13 seed in Big Ten Tournament history, reaching the semifinals, guard Bruce Thornton was recognized for his role in the Buckeyes' shocking push for the NCAA Tournament auto-bid — landing on the All-Tournament team Sunday.

Thornton led the Buckeyes with 15.5 points and 4.3 assists per game during the Cinderella run, including team-high scoring outings of 21 and 17 points against Michigan State and Iowa respectively. The standout freshman guard noted that the run in the Big Ten was a learning experience for him, adding that he plans on using that momentum toward improving in the offseason.

“(My plan is) just getting better. Playing this year with these guys is just like showing an example how to lead, how to be that top player and lead and get wins,” Thornton said after the loss to top-seeded Purdue in the semifinal. “It’s just so hard in this league trying to fight back when you’re in the hole so deep. So that’s one thing I’m going to take away, we’ve got to do our work early and try to get the most wins as much as we can, try to get double byes, at least a single bye, instead of playing four games, get like at least three. It showed a real difference (against Purdue).”

“Next year I have to show the example to the new guys coming up how to play Ohio State basketball.”

Alongside his high-level scoring performances, Thornton facilitated the offense at a high level, registering six assists in each of the Michigan State and Iowa games while not turning the ball over. In all, Thornton dished out 17 assists to just four turnovers across the four games and went the final three games without registering a single giveaway.

Thornton slotted in alongside Purdue's Zach Edey — who was also named the Most Outstanding Player of the tournament — Indiana's Trayce Jackson-Davis, and Penn State's Seth Lundy and Jalen Pickett.

Although Thornton struggled against Purdue, scoring nine points on 3-of-11 while largely being hampered by the fatigue of playing four games in four days, he left his mark on those in attendance, and

opposing coaches, at the United Center while leading the Buckeyes on the unforgettable run to the semifinal of the Big Ten Tournament.

“Bruce Thornton’s a tough cover,” Purdue head coach Matt Painter said. “You can see he does a lot for those guys.”