

Women's Basketball: Ohio State Checks In At No. 6 In ESPN's Updated Early Top 25



It's been a whirlwind few weeks for Ohio State women's basketball. Fresh off the program's first Elite Eight appearance since 1993, the team has taken several steps toward reloading, making a pair of important additions from the transfer portal in former Duke guard Celeste Taylor, the reigning ACC Defensive Player of the Year, as well as former Michigan State forward Taiyier Parks.

Those additions have people thinking highly of Ohio State heading into next season. According to ESPN's Way-Too-Early Top 25 - which was published before Parks' commitment to the Buckeyes - Ohio State is the No. 6 team in the country entering the upcoming season, up from No. 8 in an earlier edition of the rankings.

"Adding ACC Defensive Player in the Year in Duke transfer Celeste Taylor makes an already dominant press even better," wrote ESPN's Charlie Creme. "Taylor Mikesell's shooting will still be missed, but with Jacy Sheldon back for a fifth year to run the show and Cotie McMahan, the Big Ten Freshman of the Year, on the verge of being one of the game's next stars, the Buckeyes could be even better.

"Taylor Thierry and Rikki Harris should also continue to thrive in Ohio State's up-tempo attack. The Buckeyes will battle Iowa and Indiana for Big Ten supremacy and are a Final Four contender."

The Buckeyes are ranked second in the Big Ten behind No. 3 Iowa and just missed the top-five nationally, checking in behind No. 5 Utah, No. 4 UCLA, No. 2 UConn and No. 1 LSU, the defending national champions. Elsewhere in the conference, Maryland was No. 17 and Nebraska rounded out the list at No. 25. Illinois was also considered for a spot in the rankings.