

Baseball: Ohio State Hosts Nebraska In Big Ten Home Opening Weekend



When Ohio State hosts Nebraska this weekend in its first Big Ten series in Columbus, the Buckeyes will look at an opponent much like themselves.

Both programs will enter the three-game series with hopes to turn their season around, seeing this weekend as an opportunity to correct course before taking a deep dive into the heart of the conference schedule.

“Nebraska is a different ballclub than last season,” Ohio State head coach Greg Beals said. “They were old last year, and their experience led to their success. They flipped a lot of their team, so they’re different. It’s very similar to the talent we have here. Like us, they’re figuring it out and finding their winning ways.”

The Buckeyes (8-13, 0-1 Big Ten) lost their first conference matchup to Purdue last weekend. Inclement weather in West Lafayette, Ind., caused the teams to mutually postpone the remaining two games to a later date.

Ohio State’s below-.500 start isn’t what Beals had hoped for through the team’s first 21 games. However, he recognizes that the Buckeyes will have several chances to form an identity that would create steady improvement.

“Culture is not winning,” Beals said. “We have to do all the work and all the right things to set ourselves up for success on the field. We need to keep that going. Do we still believe in our goals? The things that we set out in front of us this season are still in front of us. There’s plenty of baseball left to play. We have to keep believing.”

Senior Marcus Ernst leads Ohio State with a .429 batting average, ranking second in the Big Ten and 20th nationally. He is also third in the conference in hits with 33, second in hits per game at 1.57 and second in the league with a .520 on-base percentage. Ernst has 11 multi-hit games this season, including four three-hit games.

Sophomore Kade Kern has collected a hit in four consecutive games and has at least two base knocks in each of his last three appearances. The Archibold, Ohio, native, sent two baseballs out of the park on

March 24 against Purdue and homered again on Wednesday in a home loss to Toledo.

On the mound, Friday's starting pitcher Isaiah Coupet has amassed 45 strikeouts in 28 1/3 innings. His 14.29 strikeouts per nine innings lead the Big Ten and is the 15th-best mark in the NCAA. Saturday starter Nate Haberthier tossed a complete game on March 19 against North Carolina Wilmington, allowing one earned run with four strikeouts and no walks. Haberthier's 1.82 walks per nine innings rank four in the conference.

The Cornhuskers (9-14, 1-2 Big Ten) lost two of three at home to Michigan last weekend. They have the worst team batting average in the Big Ten at .242 and the lowest on-base percentage at .334. Their defense leads the league with 17 double plays and they possess a .965 team fielding percentage.

Garrett Anglim leads Nebraska with a .358 batting average. He has seven doubles and two triples this season, indicating that he can hit for average and power. Griffin Everitt has a team-leading five home runs and 17 RBIs in the Cornhuskers' first 23 games

"It's going to be a big series," Beals said. "There will be somebody who wins a series this weekend and it's going to move them in the right direction. It has to be the Buckeyes."

Ohio State vs. Nebraska

Game 1

Date: April 1, 2022 | **Time:** 6:05 | BTN+ | Scoring/Listen |

Probable Starters:

Ohio State - Isaiah Coupet (So. | LHP | 2-2 | 5.40 ERA | 28.1 IP | 45 K | 18 BB)

Nebraska - Shay Schanaman (Sr. | RHP | 1-3 | 3.62 ERA | 32.1 IP | 33 K | 15 BB)

Game 2

Date: April 2, 2022 | **Time:** 3:05 | BTN+ | Scoring/Listen |

Probable Starters:

Ohio State - Nate Haberthier (So. | RHP | 0-1 | 8.04 ERA | 15.2 IP | 9 K | 5 BB)

Nebraska - Koty Frank (Sr. | RHP | 2-0 | 3.33 ERA | 27.0 IP | 32 K | 10 BB)

Game 3

Date: April 3, 2022 | **Time:** 1:05 | BTN+ | Scoring/Listen |

Probable Starters:

Ohio State - Wyatt Loncar (Jr. | RHP | 1-2 | 5.49 ERA | 19.2 IP | 30 K | 10 BB)

Nebraska - Dawson McCarville (Sr. | RHP | 2-3 | 6.00 ERA | 27.0 IP | 26 K | 9 BB)