

Hear From Ohio State Head Coach Chris Holtmann



Less than 30 hours away from when the No. 10 Ohio State men's basketball team (4-0) takes on Purdue Fort Wayne (2-4), head coach Chris Holtmann spoke to members of the media, highlighting the matchup and the health of his squad.

- Purdue Fort Wayne is going to have a really good season.
- Last season, the score was not indicative of how close the game was. They brought in a talented transfer from Kansas State, fourth-year junior Brian Patrick.
- The Villanova and Stetson games were atypical. We just try to lean on the understanding and leadership of the older guys. We don't anticipate having another game like the Stetson matchup. We need to learn and grow as a team.
- Purdue Fort Wayne spreads you out, shoot and make many three-pointers.
- Andre Wesson is one of the toughest kids I've ever coached. He manages injuries well. And he plays in a very physical way.
- I follow the lead of our medical personnel when dealing with Justin Ahrens and his back injury. He has struggled with it because he was at a really good place in the spring, and he hasn't been the same. The right mindset is important.
- There are 3-4 players who are questionable for the game against Purdue Fort Wayne. Practice has been somewhat limited due to injuries.
- Ryan Pedon has a tremendous work ethic. We were both assistants in the MAC and I saw what he was capable of with his work ethic. You're never certain how a coach's IQ is, but when I asked around, he was feared in recruiting. He's a people-person; he's funny - probably not as funny as he thinks he is. Pedon has been a great hire for us.
- Pedon was the biggest advocate for taking the Ohio State job - he thought I was an idiot for having second thoughts.
- It was a dicey time for us when Pedon was offered a head-coaching job right after former assistant coach Mike Schrage took the Elon job. Gene Smith helped given Pedon some perspective and

raised his salary.

- Schrage and I have texted a lot. I saw that Elon-UNC matchup; he's a Duke guy, so he was a bit animated.
- Our sole focus is on Purdue Fort Wayne, then a quick turnaround to Kent State. If teams have a vastly different play style, then you might spend more time looking ahead and planning.
- Kyle Young does not need the ball to impact the game. That's hard to find nowadays in basketball. Guys want the ball, need the ball, but he doesn't need it to impact the game. His teammates appreciate how unselfish he is - he is a tremendous teammate. He's better when he doesn't feel like he feels forced to try to score.
- Andre Wesson has not seemed timid or less aggressive in practice. When the medical staff tells me that he is good to go, there will be no limitations.
- It was nice to see Justin Ahrens hit a couple of shots. His attention to detail defensively must improve. He's one of the best shooters we have, for sure.
- Purdue Fort Wayne's guards are different this year. They're bigger. The addition of the Kansas State transfer is a big plus and helps fill that void.

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