

Holtmann Excited To Get Regular Season Rolling With New-Look Squad Against Robert Morris



The new-look Ohio State men's basketball team showcased its talents to the Buckeye fanbase for the first time on Tuesday during its 101-57 exhibition win over Division II-level Chaminade. Now, the Buckeyes' attention turns to their season opener on Monday, with the Robert Morris Colonials coming to Columbus with the goal to stun OSU on its home floor.

As the Buckeyes' 10 new players got their first taste of action at Value City Arena against the Silverswords, all that remains for the group is to get regular season play started. While the count-down clock to the season opener continues to tick down, head coach Chris Holtmann emphasized that his players are itching to get the campaign underway.

"I think they're really excited," Holtmann said on Thursday. "They've been waiting for this moment. I think there were definitely some nerves the other night, which is a good thing. They'll be nervous on Monday night, for this group, more than we've ever been just because of so many new guys.

"They're really excited about wearing the uniform. We've really stressed, all offseason, about the privilege of that. I think they're very aware of that," he continued. "They're excited about performing in front of our fans and starting this journey together."

Holtmann added that he also feels a level of nervousness mixed with excitement, pointing to the roster turnover and the youthful nature of this group as compared to the more experienced Buckeye teams over the previous few seasons of his tenure.

Holtmann may also experience a level of déjà vu against the Colonials, as the sixth-year skipper made his Ohio State debut against Robert Morris in 2017 — leading the Buckeyes to a 95-64 win at Value City Arena. But, his primary focus has remained on the game ahead rather than his prior meeting with the Colonials.

"I've not yet thought about that yet," Holtmann said. "I'll be really excited for those guys to play their first game. I know I was really excited and continue to be, that's the beauty of a new season and a new opportunity is that it comes with a lot of excitement and some nerves. That's true for coaches and

players.”

In terms of the Buckeyes’ opponent in their season opener, Robert Morris enters the 2022-23 campaign after going an abysmal 8-24 last season — including a 5-16 mark during Horizon League play. However, the Colonials showed signs of improvement during their 88-59 exhibition win over Division II-level Alliance University.

Robert Morris is led by junior guard Josh Corbin, who played his high school basketball at Gahanna Lincoln in Gahanna, Ohio. Corbin spent the last two seasons at Winthrop and made a good first impression on the Robert Morris fanbase with a game-high 27 points against Alliance.

“It’s going to be a good first game for us, it’s a veteran group,” Holtmann said. “They have a local young man that played in Gahanna that is a very good player for them.

“By all accounts, I think they’re expected to really have a good year,” he continued. “We’re excited about that challenge and the prep has begun here in these coming days leading up to Monday.”