

Key Shut Down For Remainder Of Season



Ohio State forward Zed Key will undergo surgery on his shoulder and miss the remainder of the season, head coach Chris Holtmann confirmed on Wednesday.

Key initially sustained his shoulder injury on Jan. 5 against Purdue and missed one game before playing through it, with the use of a restrictive brace, across the next nine games. However, Key reaggravated the injury after taking a pair of hits to the injured shoulder during the second half against Iowa on Thursday, before missing the Buckeyes' next game against the Boilermakers on Sunday.

"We wanted him to get back to campus so the medical team could fully evaluate him," Holtmann said Wednesday. "They didn't feel comfortable clearing him given some of his continued issues with his shoulder."

While Key was largely hampered by the injury, seeing noted declines in scoring and shooting efficiency post-surgery, he also was required to exit games on multiple occasions after tweaking his shoulder. Prior to the injury, Key posted 13.4 points per game on 63.5 percent shooting. His scoring average dropped to 8.8 points per game on 44.7 percent shooting following the injury.

Holtmann noted that the Buckeyes expected Key would have surgery after the season but added that the injury became too much for him to play through after the Iowa game.

"We had always intended for him to have surgery," Holtmann said. "This just moved up the surgery to season-ending."

Holtmann also said that the medical staff was continually testing out the strength of Key's shoulder throughout the season, and noted the fact that it continued to get weaker was a red flag in his recovery. While losing Key for the rest of the season hurts, moving the surgery up will also give him more time to recover and build toward next season.

"As it continued to weaken, and not get better, I think they felt he was going to be more susceptible to

further injury,” Holtmann said. “They just didn’t feel comfortable clearing him, which I fully supported. I know Zed and his family felt some relief in the sense that they can move forward and get the surgery done a little earlier and hopefully have a little bit of a longer offseason next year.”