

Men's Lacrosse: Reid To Lead Ohio State Against Harvard On Saturday Night



Ohio State men's lacrosse will look to build momentum on Saturday when it faces Harvard at the Southwest Florida Shootout.

The Buckeyes (3-0) are No. 8 in the Inside Lacrosse Top 25 poll and No. 10 in the most recent USILA Coaches poll after defeating then-No. 4 North Carolina, 20-8, on Feb. 19. Head coach Nick Myers said his team is excited for its opportunity to compete again and hopes to prove that last weekend's upset is a sign of things to come in Columbus this spring.

"We're chasing consistency," Myers said. "We've talked about the feeling of delayed gratification. What does it mean to push things off to the side? We need to stay hyper-focused on the task at hand. I think that's the challenge for any human being, especially when you have success, as we did on Saturday (Feb. 19). I've been proud of how we have responded, and I think that starts with leadership. The real test is this Saturday at 7 o'clock."

Ohio State's offense is powered by Jack Myers, Colby Smith, Jason Knox and Jackson Reid. Myers has a team-high 19 points from eight goals and 11 assists, while Smith leads the team with 10 goals. Knox and Reid are the program's all-around attackmen, with the former producing nine goals and one assist and the latter contributing five goals and four assists.

According to Myers, Reid embraces everything that makes Buckeye lacrosse special. He will rely on the senior from Guelph, Ontario, to lead the team this Saturday against a quality opponent.

"From the moment Reid got to campus, I knew he was special," Myers said. "His work ethic, attention to detail and the way he cares for his teammates reflect that. He is truly a servant-leader. He's someone that always puts others first. He models what I believe Buckeye lacrosse can be. He is a humble warrior that unites us.

"Jackson is a fifth-year guy, and we've built this connection that is so rich, which makes it fun. Sometimes we finish each other's sentences. I just think having that kind of chemistry and consistency is what we're looking for and what we're trying to build. But also, we have respect for one another. It is something that I don't take for granted, and I am very thankful for him."

Harvard opened its season at home and defeated the New Jersey Institute of Technology, 17-4. It was the Crimson's first game in over 700 days after the Ivy League athletics had been on pause because of

the COVID-19 pandemic. The team had 11 different scorers against the Highlanders, including a pair of three-goal efforts from Austin Madronic and Miles Botkiss.

Like Harvard, Ohio State also scores with tremendous versatility. Sixteen unique players have scored at least one goal through the first three games. In last week's win, 10 different Buckeyes scored the first 10 goals.

"We have an offense that is a community," Reid said. "Everyone gets involved, and it's not a one-person show. It's everyone trying to do their job to the best of their ability. Everyone's going to be open, and there's a ton of guys on this team that can score. There are some awesome players, and that's what's exciting for us. We have a lot of guys who can contribute."

Reid said the win over North Carolina puts into perspective the kind of talent that Ohio State possesses this season, reminding the team that they can compete with the country's best Division I lacrosse talent.

The Buckeyes ranked sixth nationally in scoring offense with 18.33 goals per game through their first three games. They also have the sixth-best scoring defense, allowing only 8.00 goals per contest. Ohio State is fifth in ground balls per game nationally with 41.67. Trent Diccicco leads the team at 6.33.

Goalie Caton Johnston features a 7.89 goals-against average and .551 save percentage, with both statistics ranking among the top 20 nationally. He's coming off a 12-save performance against North Carolina, which was his season-high.

Ohio State won its only all-time contest against Harvard — a 13-4 victory in Columbus on Feb. 25, 2007. If the Buckeyes defeat the Crimson, the team will improve to 4-0 for the fourth time in six years. It would also be the program's second win in Florida in the last five years after it defeated Jacksonville, 12-11, in overtime at the Moe's Southwest Grill Classic.

"We don't want to focus on the past," Myers said. "We've certainly moved on from (the North Carolina win), and the respect that I have for the challenge that lies ahead on Saturday is immense. We need to continue getting better. That's the focus and that's what we'll do."

HOW TO WATCH

Date: Feb. 26, 2022

Time: 7 p.m.

Watch: BTN+

Twitter: @OhioStateMLAX