

Middleton Provides Glimpse Into Future With Game-Winner At GEICO Nationals



Ohio State commit Scotty Middleton is still months away from his arrival into the program, but he's already providing Buckeye fans with a glimpse of what could be coming.

Middleton, a 6-6 forward for Wichita (Kan.) Sunrise Christian Academy, has been a key cog for Sunrise, aiding the program to the GEICO Nationals — a postseason tournament that features some of the most prominent programs in high school basketball. Sunrise Christian's chances in the opening round were considered a long shot after it drew top-seeded Montverde Academy — helmed by top-15 recruits Kwame Evans Jr. and Sean Stewart.

But, Middleton left his mark on the tournament early by knocking down a game-winning three-pointer with 23 seconds remaining to lift Sunrise Christian to a massive upset win, 46-45, on Thursday.

"I just stood there at the wing and I said, 'Please hit me,'" Middleton said. "We made eye contact and he hit me. Once I got the ball, I knew I was going to shoot it and I put it up and it went in."

❑ Ice in his veins!!

Scotty Middleton knocked down this clutch go-ahead three that proved to be the game winner today over #1 seed Montverde Academy in the Geico High School Nationals! ❑
@ScottyMiddleto9 | #GoBucks pic.twitter.com/ugY7zE2xWJ

— Ohio State Hoops (@OhioStateHoops) March 30, 2023

The victory snapped a 15-game winning streak for Montverde and also served as revenge for Sunrise Christian, who fell to Montverde twice during January. Middleton tallied 12 points, three assists and two rebounds in the win.

Touted primarily for his defensive acumen, Middleton ranks as the No. 44 player in the 2023 class and No. 10 small forward. Although his defense is what typically stands out about his game, it was his refined offensive game that helped push Sunrise Christian to the huge upset.

“It was one of those moments where it had to go in,” Middleton said of the game-winner. “I hadn’t been hitting threes all game, so it was one of those ones where I got my knees under, got my legs under me, and I just knew it was going in once it came off.”

Sunrise Christian will continue its postseason run on Friday against Branson (Mo.) Link Academy — Ohio State center Felix Okpara’s alma mater — at 3:30 p.m. on ESPN2.