

Mike Conley Is The Only Former Ohio State Player In Playoffs, Will Face Memphis Grizzlies In Opening Round



The most experienced and accomplished Ohio State player in the NBA is also the only one in the playoffs.

That player is Mike Conley, the Utah Jazz guard who has enjoyed an impressive 14th season in the league, and will now help his No. 1 seed Jazz through a postseason run, starting with a matchup against the Memphis Grizzlies.

In 51 games this year, Conley averaged 16.2 points, 3.5 rebounds and 6.0 assists while shooting 44.4 percent from the field and 41.2 percent from three. His efforts were enough to earn him his first ever spot in the All-Star game at age 33.

The Jazz held the best record in the NBA this season at 52-20. Even with the top record, Utah was still slightly improved when Conley was in the lineup, going 37-14 (72.5 win percentage) compared to the 15-6 record (71.4 win percentage) without him.

Conley is one of four active former Buckeyes in the NBA, with the others being Keita Bates-Diop (Spurs), D'Angelo Russell (Timberwolves) and Jae'Sean Tate (Rockets). Only Bates-Diop was close to making the postseason, with his San Antonio Spurs falling to the Grizzlies during the play-in tournament.

Memphis, Conley's former team for 12 seasons, also defeated the Golden State Warriors 117-112 in overtime on Friday to get to face the Jazz in the first round. The Grizzlies were led by point guard Ja Morant, who finished with 35 points, six rebounds and six assists.

While Memphis does not have any former Ohio State players on the roster, it does have one in the coaching staff. Assistant coach Scoonie Penn played with the Buckeyes from 1998-2000, and was Ohio State's director of player development before taking his current position with the Grizzlies.

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