

NHL Officials Assessing Ohio Stadium For Potential Outdoor Hockey Game



According to a report Tuesday from TSN's Darren Dreger, a handful of NHL representatives visited Ohio Stadium this past weekend to assess the venue for a potential outdoor game in the future.

"The National Hockey League is constantly planning the bigger events, and the Winter Classic is one of their marquee events. I know that league officials were at Ohio State on the weekend and they were conducting a site survey of Ohio Stadium," Dreger said. "I'm sure the (Columbus) Blue Jackets are looking forward to this becoming official. It's not official yet. It's in the preliminary stages."

Ohio Stadium has long been suggested as a potential venue for an outdoor hockey game, as the Blue Jackets are one of just four NHL teams that have not played in an outdoor game.

The biggest issue precluding an outdoor game at Ohio Stadium has been the cost of winterizing the venue, which has been speculated would be required for an outdoor game, though the NHL could also look at hosting a game at Ohio Stadium later in the season to avoid the need for winterization. But Dreger's report also said that the NHL is considering Ohio Stadium for the NHL's Winter Classic, which would be played in January.

Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith told WSYX's Clay Hall on Wednesday that he is optimistic that Ohio Stadium will eventually be able to host an outdoor game.

"They came and they were really impressed with how we operate, speaking to our game management staff and everything they do," Smith said. "They were really impressed with how well we run contests with 105,000 people in it. ... Not sure what we would get here, but they were very impressed. I think we've got a shot. They're really considering us really hard, so we're kind of in that wait and see mode right now."

EXTENDED COMMENTS: @OSU_AD on possible @NHL Outdoor game in the Shoe.
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— Clay Hall (@claywsyx6) November 15, 2023