

Ohio State Head Coach Chris Holtmann Previews Big Ten Matchup With Nebraska



Coming off four straight losses, the Ohio State men's basketball team welcomes Nebraska to Value City Arena for a Big Ten battle at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 13.

Head coach Chris Holtmann spoke to members of the media Jan. 12 approximately 28 hours away from tipoff against Fred Hoiberg's Cornhuskers.

- Nebraska is playing really confident basketball now. They have a dynamic group of guards, who are veteran for the most part. Fred has done a good job.
- You're always looking for a team you can lose with first. A team that understands what it means to push through a difficult situation. One of my first coaches said, 'You're going to be happiest when you find a group to lose with first.'
- As coaches, we've got to find a way to put the players in better positions. The players have to step up and play with confidence.
- We have a good feel for our identity. I think searching late for who are playmakers are
- Junior big man Kaleb Wesson, who leads the team in turnovers, can be better with the ball. Offensive fouls are turnovers too. He's a better passer and more sure handed than he's played like.
- I just didn't feel like sophomore guard Duane Washington was ready to play. His mind was not where it needed to be. I thought his attention to detail was poor.
- Coaches go back and forth on pushing the pace or slowing it down. I think the tendency is to try to slow it down when we're struggling. For us, we've got to find ways to attack in transition. We've got to look at early post-ups in transition when we can.
- Our best player is a guy that needs to touch the ball a lot of possessions in Kaleb Wesson.
- Throughout the course of the game our balance has been a strength. But lately, we've been too predictable. We need to get back to being more balanced.
- Freshman forward E.J. Liddell has been adjusting well. He was bigger, stronger and more athletic than everybody in high school. His adjustment is like any freshman across the country.
- Senior wing Andre Wesson showed tremendous effort on his chase-down block, then ran down in transition and put back a miss by junior guard C.J. Walker. That kind of play by a senior is huge and shows the kind of effort we need to play with.
- I'm contemplating starting freshman forward D.J. Carton, and it could be on or off the ball.

- Junior forward Kyle Young has a high pain tolerance and he showed toughness against West Virginia battling appendicitis. He's struggling with fatigue now as he's recovering. He has a high motor, so he's working on getting his wind back.
- You've got to be tough-minded in the Big Ten going through a difficult stretch like this.
- Washington is a young kid who has a great attitude. It's hard to project how he'll respond. He's important to this group. His preparation has to continue to improve.
- C.J. Walker is probably best right now at running our team, and I think he and D.J. have played well together. I think having another ball-handler out there helps D.J.
- It's important to work through Kaleb Wesson. He's such a willing passer. We have to get him better at finishing through contact with the amount of contact he's feeling. We also have to have other ways that we can attack, though.
- Moving forward our team will be dictated by our veteran players like the Wessons, Young and Walker.

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