

Ohio State Misses NCAA Tournament For First Time In Holtmann's Tenure



For the first time since head coach Chris Holtmann took the reins of the program in 2017, Ohio State will not be dancing in the NCAA Tournament.

After a 16-19 season — including a 5-15 mark in Big Ten play — Ohio State registered its worst record in the Holtmann era, breaking a five-year streak of reaching at least 20 wins. The Buckeyes made a spirited attempt at landing the Big Ten's auto-bid, reaching the semifinals of the Big Ten Tournament despite being a No. 13 seed while becoming the lowest seed to reach that point of the tournament.

Ohio State triumphed over Wisconsin, Iowa and Michigan State — with the Spartans and Hawkeyes punching their tickets to the Big Dance on Sunday — but couldn't get past top-seeded Purdue in the conference semifinals. The Boilermakers earned a No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament's East Region.

The Big Ten tied for the most teams to reach the Big Dance with eight squads, slotting in alongside the SEC — which produced the No. 1 overall seed, Alabama. Joining the Hawkeyes, Spartans and Boilermakers in the NCAA Tournament are Northwestern, Penn State, Maryland, Indiana and Illinois.

Ohio State made a case to reach the National Invitation Tournament, as the tournament does not require teams to have a .500 record to qualify, however no sub-.500 team has ever competed in the NIT. Holtmann was noncommittal to a potential NIT berth, noting that the Buckeyes have injuries "beyond what is public" and would need some time to rest and heal after playing four games in four days at the Big Ten Tournament.