

Ohio State Picks Up Pair Of Wins On Bahamas Trip




The 124th iteration of the Ohio State men's basketball team got its first taste of playing together on Saturday and Sunday, picking up a pair of wins over the Egyptian and Puerto Rican national teams at the Atlantis Resort in the Bahamas.

As the Buckeyes boast a roster of 10 new additions, including five freshmen, three transfers and two new walk-ons, Ohio State's international trip to the Bahamas allows the team to build chemistry with one another on and off of the court. Prior to leaving for the trip, head coach Chris Holtmann said his team will use the time to improve as a team, but to also get to know each other and build camaraderie.

Although Saturday's exhibition game against the Egyptian national team marked the first time a large chunk of this team has played together, Ohio State snuck past Egypt 72-68 to open competition on a good note. The games were played under FIBA rules, which meant Ohio State played four 10-minute quarters as opposed to two 20-minute halves against Egypt and Puerto Rico.

The highlight of the Buckeyes' triumph over Egypt came from freshman shooting guard Roddy Gayle Jr., who drove from the baseline and soared for a two-handed slam over an Egyptian defender to push Ohio State's lead to 68-65 with just under a minute to play in the game.

□ As promised! Who else do you want to see??@roddy_gayle | #Team124
<https://t.co/HPV6zdrHti> pic.twitter.com/3hS1RnBhLF

—  Ohio State Hoops (@OhioStateHoops) August 7, 2022

Ohio State got right back to its winning ways a day later, squeaking past Puerto Rico 75-68, despite spending some of the day at the pool. The Buckeyes saw a familiar foe in Puerto Rican guard Alfonso Plummer, who connected on eight 3-pointers against Ohio State on February 24 as a member of the Illinois men's basketball team last season.

Despite early defensive troubles, the Buckeyes locked down in the second quarter — holding Puerto Rico without a made 3-pointer for the entire frame. Ohio State's increased intensity on the defensive end allowed the team to lead 39-34 at halftime.

A pair of threes from freshman forward Brice Sensabaugh allowed the Buckeyes to increase their lead to 60-51 heading into the fourth quarter. Puerto Rico brought Ohio State's advantage down to three points late in the game, but a transition layup by freshman guard Bruce Thornton and pair of free throws from transfer guard Sean McNeil iced the win for the Buckeyes.

Ohio State was without graduate forwards Seth Towns and Justice Sueing, who continue to nurse season-ending injuries from last season.

The Buckeyes return to the states on Tuesday with valuable game experience under their belt. They'll have the first opportunity to show off their abilities to the Ohio State faithful in an exhibition game against Chaminade on Nov. 1 at the Schottenstein Center.