

Ohio State Sophomore Guard Bruce Thornton, Fifth-Year Forward Jamison Battle Earn All-Big Ten Honors



Two of Ohio State's more impactful players were recognized by the Big Ten for their efforts this season on Tuesday, with sophomore guard Bruce Thornton receiving third-team All-Big Ten honors from the media and an honorable mention nod from Big Ten coaches, and fifth-year forward Jamison Battle earning honorable mention All-Big Ten from both the coaches and media.

This marks the second time Battle has received honorable mention accolades from the conference, with the first coming in 2021-22 with Minnesota, while it is Thornton's first all-conference honor of his career.

Thornton emerged as the team's unquestioned team leader and top performer this season in just his year with the program. Starting 30 of the team's 31 games this regular season — the only game he missed was due to a migraine — the Fairburn, Ga., native led his team in scoring (16.1 points per game), assists (128), steals (37) and minutes (33.6 per game), while also shooting 42.3 percent from the field and an efficient 86.3 percent from the charity stripe. Thornton's assist total from the regular season was 33 more than the second-highest Buckeye, that being fellow sophomore guard Roddy Gayle Jr.

Thornton's all-around ability earned him constant attention from opposing teams all season, who often made the sophomore guard a focal point of their defensive gameplan, leading to double-teams and traps. But that didn't stop him from having some strong performances, most notably his 29-point, three-rebound and four-assist outing in Ohio State's upset win over then No. 17 Alabama on Nov. 24, along with his 24-point, seven-assist performance in the Buckeyes' double-overtime win over Maryland on Feb. 10, when he provided the game-tying shots in both regulation and overtime as well as the game-winning shot in the second extra period.

But Thornton made perhaps his most significant impact with his leadership, particularly in the weeks after the program fired former head coach Chris Holtman on Feb. 14. The sophomore made it known after the firing that he was committing to keeping the team together and motivated during this tumultuous stretch, a showing of leadership that interim head coach Jake Diebler makes him a special player and person.

“He’s a tone setter,” Diebler said. “His consistency is all-time great, as far as consistently bringing his best stuff. It’s kind of like how Aaron Craft was. That’s how David Lighty would’ve been like. So the consistency he brings is really valuable.”

Battle made a seamless transition to the Scarlet and Gray after spending the previous two seasons at Minnesota. Starting all but one game for the Buckeyes during the regular season, the fifth-year emerged as one of the team’s most formidable scoring threats, ranking second on the team behind only Thornton in points with 14.4 while also a crisp 47.1 percent from the floor. He also ranked second in rebounds with 4.8 per game, trailing only sophomore center Felix Okpara, and shot a team-high 94.9 percent from the free-throw line (56 of 69).

Battle’s biggest impact came beyond the arc, though, where he made a team-high 81 threes — — 33 more makes than the second-leading three-point shooter on the team — in 184 attempts, good for 44.0 percent, a mark that ranked first in the conference.

Battle’s scoring was perhaps most felt during Ohio State’s shocking 73-69 upset win over No. 2 Purdue on Feb. 18 — the team’s first game since the firing of head coach Chris Holtmann — when he erupted for 19 second-half points on 6-of-8 shooting, including 3-of-5 shooting from three.

Below is the full list of All-Big Ten honors announced on Tuesday:

First-Team All-Big Ten

- Boo Buie - Northwestern guard (coaches and media)
- Marcus Domask - Illinois guard/forward (coaches)
- Zach Edey - Purdue center (coaches and media)
- Terrance Shannon Jr. - Illinois guard (coaches and media)
- Braden Smith - Purdue guard (coaches and media)
- Jahmir Young - Maryland guard (media)

Second-Team All-Big Ten

- Dawson Garcia - Minnesota forward (media)
- Marcus Domask (media)
- Tony Perkins - Iowa guard (coaches)
- A.J. Storr - Wisconsin guard (coaches and media)
- Keisei Tominaga - Nebraska guard (coaches)
- Tyson Walker - Michigan State guard (coaches and media)
- Kel’el Ware - Indiana forward (media)
- Jahmir Young (coaches)

Third-Team All-Big Ten

- Brooks Barznhizer - Northwestern guard (coaches)
Ace Baldwin Jr. - Penn State guard (coaches and media)
- Dawson Garcia (coaches)
- Coleman Hawkins - Illinois forward (media)
- Rienk Mast - Nebraska center
- Payton Sandfort - Iowa forward (coaches and media)
- Keisei Tominaga (media)
- Bruce Thornton (coaches and media)
- Kel'el Ware (coaches)

Big Ten All-Defensive Team

- Ace Baldwin Jr.
- Brooks Barnhizer
- Zach Edey
- Chucky Hepburn - Wisconsin guard
- Cliff Omoruyi - Rutgers center

Big Ten All-Freshman Team

- John Blackwell - Wisconsin guard
- Cam Christie - Minnesota guard
- Owen Freeman - Iowa forward
- Deshawn Harris-Smith - Maryland guard
- Mackenzie Mgbako - Indiana forward

Big Ten Player of the Year

- Zach Edey (back-to-back winner)

Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year

- Ace Baldwin Jr.

Co-Big Ten Freshman of the Year

- Owen Freeman
- Mackenzie Mgbako

Big Ten Sixth Man of the Year

- Mason Gillis - Purdue forward

Co-Big Ten Coach of the Year

- Matt Painter - Purdue
- Fred Hoiberg - Nebraska

Howard Moore Assistant Coach of the Year

- Brandon Brantley - Purdue