

Ohio State Women's Basketball Feels "Sense Of Urgency" Coming Off Elite Eight Appearance



Ohio State women's basketball began practice on Tuesday in advance of the upcoming season, which is set to begin Nov. 6 against USC in Las Vegas, and head coach Kevin McGuff said he likes the way the offseason has gone for the program coming off last season's run to the Elite Eight.

"I like the additions that we've added, the freshmen, the transfers, and they've integrated themselves into the program very successfully," he said Tuesday. "That's always where I want to start when we add new people, and so that's gone well. The kids have worked really hard and our upperclassmen have provided great leadership. So overall it's been really good."

It was the first appearance in the Elite Eight for Ohio State since 1993, but the Buckeyes have set their goals higher this season, with those in the program – including transfer guard Celeste Taylor – seeing Ohio State as having national championship potential.

As that potential has been evident over the last few months, as McGuff said there has been a "sense of urgency" as the team has prepared for this season.

"(There's) no complacency," he said. "They want to build on what we did last year, and I think that kind of starts with our leadership – Jacy (Sheldon), Rikki (Harris) and those kids. Celeste has emerged as a leader pretty quickly, and so it's been very competitive. The work ethic's been really good."

This summer was an important one for Ohio State, which welcomed in five new players (three from the transfer portal and two freshmen) along with managing the loss of guard Taylor Mikesell to the professional ranks. But those moving parts did not stop the Buckeyes from taking full advantage of the offseason, including an international trip to Brazil that helped the team grow closer.

"I think for us, we're really competitive and we went at it a lot of summer," Sheldon said. "We have a lot of newcomers, too, so it's a good time for us to learn how to play with each other, get comfortable with each other, and that's what I've been doing."

And with the Buckeyes beginning practice and set to return to the court to begin the season in just over

a month, Sheldon is looking forward to seeing how the team continues to grow.

“Starting practice today, I imagine we’re going to compete just as much,” she said. “The special thing about this team is we make each other better. We love competing. We have a lot of people who are really talented on this team, so making each other better is only going to push us more in the long run.”