Ohio State Women's Hoops At No. 13 In ESPN's Way-Too-Early Top 25

The 2021-22 season wrapped on Sunday with South Carolina taking down UConn, 64-49, to win the school's second national championship. With the tournament concluded, the focus now shifts to the 2022-23 season, which is set to begin in a little over seven months.

ESPN released the annual Way-Too-Early Top 25 rankings on April 3, and Ohio State checked in at No. 13 on their list.

"In one of the quietest championship seasons the Big Ten has ever seen, the Buckeyes tied Iowa for the regular season title. They should return four of the top five scorers from that team, and much will revolve around the backcourt," ESPN's Charlie Creme wrote. "Taylor Mikesell's decision to take her extra season to rejoin All-America candidate Jacy Sheldon, plus a full recovery by Madison Greene — who missed the 2020-21 with a knee injury but averaged 13.4 PPG in 2021-22 — combine to gives Ohio State a trio that is hard to match."

Beyond Greene, Mikesell and Sheldon, Ohio State will continue to build on the breakout seasons of redshirt sophomore guard Rikki Harris and freshman Taylor Thierry, who both stepped up in the second half of the season as the Buckeyes fought to a Big Ten co-championship and an appearance in the Sweet 16.

Ohio State will be looking to not only repeat as Big Ten champions next year, but to return to the Sweet 16 and fight for the school's first Elite Eight appearance since 1993, when the Nancy Darsch-led Buckeyes made it to the national championship game before falling to Texas Tech.

The Buckeyes are joined on the list by several Big Ten teams, including No. 5 Maryland, No. 6 Iowa, No. 17 Indiana and No. 20 Nebraska. The defending national champions, South Carolina, are at No. 1, following by No. 2 UConn, No. 3 Stanford and No. 4 Texas.

Ohio State finished the season at No. 14 in the final AP poll. The Buckeyes closed the season with eight straight appearances in the top 25 after falling out earlier in the season, though at no point did they stop receiving votes.