

# Ohio State's E.J. Liddell Discusses Threatening Messages From Fans



Ohio State sophomore forward E.J. Liddell met with reporters on Wednesday morning to discuss a disappointing end to the Buckeyes' season, as well as the threatening messages he received from fans on social media following the 75-72 loss to Oral Roberts in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.

After experiencing harassment on social media, E.J. Liddell of @OhioStateHoops spoke out against those comments.

Today, he discussed what occurred and how to move forward: "Hopefully this will slow down and—in the near future—come to an end." #GoBuckeyes

— Ohio State Buckeyes □ (@OhioStAthletics) March 24, 2021

"It was not the first time I've gotten stuff like that honestly," Liddell said. "It was just after a heartbreaking loss that ended our season. I just felt like it was time to say something. A lot of other athletes felt the same way. They get comments all the time.

"I'd rather people see us like humans and pick us up because we sacrificed so much for this season. We really lost all of our social lives during this season. I wanted to use my voice about it. I've been quiet about it and I have tough skin when it comes to criticism. But that wasn't constructive criticism. That was brutal and hardcore and did not sit right with me. I feel like it needs to stop."

Liddell had 23 points and 14 rebounds in Friday's loss to the No. 15 seed Golden Eagles, which marked the biggest upset of the tournament to date. He was then the target of the threatening messages, which he shared to social media on Saturday morning.

"It definitely bothered me a little bit just because I go out there and put a smile on my face every game and play basketball," Liddell said. "For people to feel so ill about me after I have a couple turnovers or miss a one-and-one free throw, it doesn't sit right with me because I have feelings, too. I don't understand why anybody would come at me like that. I definitely haven't hurt anybody in my life."

That said, Liddell noted that 98 percent of the messages he receives from fans are positive and that this incident won't overshadow what he felt was a strong season overall.

"There's always that 2 person that comes at you pretty, pretty rough," Liddell said. "Sometimes fans get too high or too low, honestly, and get into their emotions, but basically most of the time it's all Buckeye fans being positive."

As for his future, Liddell said he's undecided about returning for his junior season or if he'll test the NBA's draft waters.

"I'm just focused on getting back to my regular life, being a little bit more social and getting back to my video games," he said.

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