

OSU To Face Penn State In Big Ten Quarterfinals



The Big Ten officially set its bracket for the conference's men's ice hockey tournament Monday, and as the third seed No. 8 Ohio State is slated to face No. 10 Penn State, the tournament's sixth seed.

Penn State features four skaters at 22 points or more on the season but none above 27, taking more of a committee-like approach to its offensive production. Senior forward Kevin Wall is one of two players right at that 27 point mark, scoring a team-high 14 goals to go with 13 assists.

Senior forward Ture Linden, meanwhile, leads the Nittany Lions with 17 assists, coupled with 10 goals for another 27-point total. Forwards Connor MacEachern and Connor McMenamin check in with 23 and 22 points, respectively.

On the blue line junior defenseman Christian Berger leads the charge, with 62 blocked shots nearly doubling the second-best total on the team.

He'll help guard the net minded by junior goaltender Liam Souliere, whose save percentage of .910 ranks fifth in the conference. He's allowed 2.52 goals per game on the season.

After a six-game winning streak that spanned from early December into mid January, the Buckeyes sloped off a tad to close the regular season, closing it out 3-6-2 to maintain an 18-12-3 overall record and 11-10-2 mark in league play. Penn State is comparable in both categories, with a 20-13-1 overall record and 10-13-1 finish in the Big Ten.

The two sides split their regular season series 2-2, with each team winning one contest at home and one on the road. OSU did barely edge PSU in aggregate goals across those four games, 12-11.

Ohio State will also have the advantage of home ice for the best-of-three series. The Buckeyes have taken advantage often when in front of a favorable crowd at the Schottenstein Center this year, posting a 10-3-1 record.

Puck drops at 7 p.m. Friday for game one between Ohio State and Penn State in Columbus. Game two is scheduled for 5 p.m. Saturday with game three to follow at 5 p.m. Sunday, if necessary.