

Thornton Elevated To Captain For The Buckeyes



As the season has worn on, Ohio State head coach Chris Holtmann has increasingly relied on the leadership of his starting point guard, freshman Bruce Thornton.

During the Buckeyes' losing stretch in January, Thornton was invited to captain meetings despite not carrying the title of team captain. As Ohio State's season has been sent into a tailspin since the calendar flipped to 2023, with the Buckeyes losing nine of their last 10 games and falling to 11-12, Holtmann decided to shake things up in regard to the team's leadership structure.

Holtmann instituted a re-vote among the team for the captain positions in the midst of the losing stretch, and Thornton received enough votes to be elevated in status, joining current captains Zed Key, Justice Sueing and Isaac Likekele as team leaders.

"I just wanted our guys to have a say in re-voting for the leadership on the team, and I just thought it was a good time to do it," Holtmann said on Monday. "They re-voted and (Bruce) got a significant number of votes. It's the first time we've really had a freshman do that.

"Typically we do that early in the year and it's just once on the year," he continued. "I just think with such a new group, it was important to do it again."

Although Holtmann revealed Thornton's rise to captaincy, he did not divulge if any of the veteran captains fell out of the leadership ranks.

As the leadership responsibility has grown for Thornton, he noted that using his voice to lead comes with the territory of playing the point guard position for the Buckeyes.

"(Holtmann) told me, being a point guard, you have to be that leader, you have to be that vocal person on the team," Thornton said on Jan. 31. "So I just took advantage of it and used my voice."

For Thornton, he said he wants to maximize his leadership opportunities by continuing to use his voice and carrying himself the right way.

“It’s showing on and off the court, how Ohio State should be represented,” Thornton said. “It’s emphasizing character, being respectful, having a bunch of humility about yourself. I feel like we have those characteristics.”