

Win Over Minnesota Places Holtmann In Small Club



Ohio State's 75-64 victory over Minnesota Jan. 27 earned Buckeye head man Chris Holtmann admittance to one of the most exclusive clubs that the program has, as it made him just the seventh person to win 100 games as an Ohio State men's basketball head coach.

He joins program leader Thad Matta (337), national champion Fred Taylor (297), Harold Olsen (255), Eldon Miller (174), Jim O'Brien (133) and Randy Ayers (124). He's the fourth straight Buckeye coach to earn the distinction and the sixth within the last seven hires the program has made, split only by Gary Williams (59), who spent only three years in town.

"I think any coach will tell you that their success is directly tied to their ability to recruit good players, and players who also embrace what that coach and coaching staff preaches," Holtmann said. "I think that's so important. It's not just good players, but it's players that embrace and communicate that to the other players, what's important to the coaching staff, our program's culture."

Reaching the mark in 148 games, Holtmann is the third fastest to 100, trailing only Taylor (120) and Matta (134). Ayers did it in 155, O'Brien in 156, Miller in 172 and Olsen in at least 186 (schedule information is not readily available for 1933-34, when he broke 100).

His 67.6 percent winning percentage is the second-best of any member of the group, only behind Matta's 73.3 percent, which is easily the highest of any Buckeye coach that stayed in Columbus for more than two seasons. Thomas Kibler leads the way at 91.7 overall but coached only 24 games. On Holtmann's current pace, he would tie Matta's high water-mark for wins in 499 games coached, 351 games or roughly 10 seasons from now.

"It's also very exciting about what's on the cusp here for us here, both with our young guys growing into new roles as well as the incoming talent," Holtmann said. "It really is."