

Women's Basketball: Ohio State Adds Former Duke Guard Celeste Taylor From Transfer Portal



Ohio State has made the program's first transfer addition of the offseason, and it's a significant one as the Buckeyes added former Duke guard Celeste Taylor, the reigning ACC Defensive Player of the Year, on Thursday.

Taylor (5-11) recently completed her fourth season of college basketball - spending her first two at Texas and most recent two seasons with the Blue Devils - and will be a graduate transfer for the Buckeyes, entering with one year of eligibility remaining and the ability to play right away for Ohio State.

Hey Buckeye Nation ♥️ pic.twitter.com/ov4XGuKs48

— Celeste Taylor (@_celeste620) April 20, 2023

She led Duke this past season with 11.4 points per game while adding 4.8 rebounds, 2.5 assists and 2.2 assists per contest. Taylor shot 39.4 percent from the field and 32.1 percent from deep last season, the former a career high.

Duke finished with a 26-7 record last season before falling in the second round of the NCAA tournament in a loss to Colorado. In that loss, Taylor had 8 points, 10 rebounds, eight assists and 10 steals, becoming the first player in the women's tournament since at least 2000 to finish with a stat line of at least 8 points, eight rebounds, eight assists and eight steals.

While the Blue Devils struggled to score at times, averaging just 63.6 points, the defense allowed just 51.0 points per game, which was second in the country behind only Norfolk State (50.7 points). Taylor helped lead this defensive effort, named ACC Defensive Player of the Year and earning first-team All-ACC and ACC All-Defensive Team honors. She was also a finalist for the Naismith Women's Defensive Player of the Year.

A native of Valley Stream, N.Y., Taylor played at Long Island Lutheran before committing to Texas out of high school in the 2019 recruiting class. She was a Big 12 All-Freshman selection in her first season and was named an All-Big 12 honorable mention her sophomore year, when Texas made it all the way to the Elite Eight.

She had previously announced that she would be returning to Duke for her fifth season, but she later opted to enter the portal in early April. She is one of several Blue Devils to transfer this offseason, joining Shay Bollin, Shayeann Day-Wilson, Jordyn Oliver and Lee Volker.

Taylor's addition is an important one for an Ohio State team that is losing a starting shooting guard in Taylor Mikesell to the WNBA, especially one that shot as well as Mikesell did. While Taylor is not the shooter that Mikesell is, she can more than make up the deficit with her defensive acumen, and it should make for a deadly pairing with guard Jacy Sheldon, who is back for a fifth season with the Buckeyes.