

**Stat of the week**  
Former men's soccer defender Ryo Shimazaki was selected in the third round of the MLS Superdraft by the Columbus Crew on Monday afternoon.



Sophomore guard KeShawn Curry worked on the basketball fundamentals to improve his skills. Photo by Alessandro Latour

# The emergence of KeShawn Curry

## EARNING MINUTES THROUGH HARD WORK

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Drill after drill, KeShawn Curry worked toward one goal last season and during off-season workouts: earn more minutes.

His mindset stayed the same each drill he went through: work harder than the person playing in front of him. He was rebuilding his game, refining the basketball fundamentals to show his high-energy style of play. But first, the sophomore guard had to gain minutes on the floor.

“Just trying to work on everything that needed to be worked on in my overall game,” Curry said. “Start from scratch all over again and kind of try to rebuild everything I needed to rebuild in order to gain minutes.”

From ball handling drills to footwork to dribbling drills, Curry worked with Matt Venezia, last year’s director of student-athlete development, to overhaul his game. The long days at practice and running through the same drills multiple times a day finally paid off for Curry this season.

When preseason practices rolled around this year, he noticed the improvement.

“As we started to practice more, started to do more stuff as a team and playing pickup, I started to see the things I worked on start to come out as I was playing,” Curry said.

Last season, Curry appeared in 15 games and logged 86 minutes total. This season, he’s worked his way into the rotation,

### RAM STAT

Sophomore guard KeShawn Curry averages 16.8 minutes a game this season.

appearing in all 17 games and recording 284 minutes.

The biggest improvement Curry saw was in his defensive play, most of which came from watching the Havoc defense from the bench and learning from redshirt-senior forward Issac Vann.

“I got to see it a lot last year from being on the side — seeing it, dissecting it, analyzing it,” Curry said. “Playing it definitely helps. ... I followed it a lot last year, seeing things that they messed up on, that other teams messed up on, things that we executed off of.”

This season, Curry has logged 10 steals and six blocks. In his freshman campaign, Curry only recorded two steals and a block.

The Jacksonville, Florida, native’s offensive production also improved and was noticed early in the season when he scored a team-high 14 points in the exhibition against Virginia State.

“[Curry] gives us such a positive punch on both ends of the ball,” coach Mike



Sophomore guard KeShawn Curry surpassed his minutes play from last season. He’s played in 284 minutes this year and only appeared in 86 minutes last season. Photo by Jon Mirador

Rhoades said after the exhibition. “He knocks the ball on defense, causes some problems. Offensively, he improved his shot, he can get to the rim.”

Curry logged a season-high 12 points Dec. 29 against Loyola (Md.), as he shot 43% from the field in the contest.

When Curry wasn’t playing often last season, he kept himself motivated and his confidence level up.

what the freshmen on the team this season are going through.

“Knowing that they’re not playing how they want to be playing just keeping their head above water and working hard every day,” Curry said. “Because you never know when somebody might go down or coach might call your name out of nowhere. You have to be ready to go.”

“I’ve just been my biggest fan at all times,” Curry told The Commonwealth Times in February. “Just keep myself motivated, and that’s what’s going to keep me mentally strong. That’s what keeps my confidence the way it is.”

Now, after earning consistent minutes on the floor and improving his defense, Curry has his sights set on improving another thing: his shooting.

“Just continue to try to shoot the ball better,” Curry said on Friday. “Taking better shots, just to start seeing it going in ... with a higher rate of consistency.”

After appearing in about half of the team’s games last season, Curry can relate to