

Five-Star Guard Darryn Peterson Places Ohio State In Top Four After “Great” Visit



Ohio State and head coach Jake Diebler inched closer to securing a top-of-the-line prospect in the 2026 class this week.

Napa (Calif.) Prolific Prep five-star combo guard Darryn Peterson (6-5, 195), the nation’s third-best prospect and top-ranked combo guard, placed Ohio State in his final four alongside Kansas, Kansas State and USC on Tuesday after having what he called a “great” visit with the Buckeyes this past weekend.

“Overall, the visit was great,” Peterson told Joe Tipton of On3Sports. “I really enjoyed being there. It was my second or third time being there but it was the first time with Jake Diebler as the head coach. So I really enjoyed that part of it.”

As Peterson alluded to, Ohio State and Diebler have established a relationship with the five-star that dates all the way back to his middle school days. Ohio State offered Peterson, a native of Canton, Ohio, native, the summer before his freshman season at Cuyahoga Valley in 2021, becoming one of the first of what is now 24 Division I schools to extend him a scholarship.

Ohio State’s pursuit of Peterson has always been with Diebler at the forefront — he served as his primary recruiter while as an assistant on former head coach Chris Holtmann’s staff — a factor that the guard said goes a long way when choosing where to spend his likely short college basketball career.

“Coach Diebler has been recruiting me since like eighth grade so the relationship is already there. He’s doing a great job recruiting me,” he said. “The coaching staff walked me through where they all came from and the experience they have and that they’re super excited to get a chance to coach me. The staff is all experienced and they’ve coached a lot of pros. I feel like if I went there, they would be able to develop me and help me get ready to play in the NBA.”

There were little details revealed regarding what the Canton native did on his visit to Columbus other than him posing for pictures in an all-gray Buckeyes uniform in a photoshoot later posted on social media. But Peterson mentioned that he did get the chance to watch the team practice at Value City Arena, where he learned that their style of play is synonymous with the way he operates as a player.

“I got to watch practice and see some of their plays. Just from what I’ve seen, they did a lot of DHO’s (dribble-hand-offs) and ball screens, and that’s my bread and butter,” Peterson said. “That was something I really liked because that’s something I do a lot with my team now and all the teams I’ve been on. DHO’s and ball screens are what I love to do.”

Peterson’s off-the-dribble ability, among many other things, has helped him gradually emerge as one of the top prospects in the 2025 class. After averaging 31.0 points, 9.8 rebounds, 2.8 steals and 1.3 assists and becoming an Ohio Mr. Basketball finalist his sophomore year at Cuyahoga, Peterson transferred to Huntington (Wva.) Prep, where he excelled again, scoring roughly 24 points, six rebounds and four assists per game last season.

Peterson’s hot start to his high school career, along with his successes in the AAU circuit while playing for Phenom United, has brought him to another basketball-centric private school, Prolific Prep, his senior season, where he will look to further fine-tune his craft and potentially make a run to become the top prospect in the class.

Peterson has yet to provide a timeline on when he wants to commit to a school, but regardless, the Buckeyes have put themselves in great position to secure what would be the program’s highest-rated commit since former Buckeye two-time All-American forward Jared Sullinger in 2010.