

Former Alabama Safety Transfer Caleb Downs Transferring To Ohio State



According to several reports on Friday, former Alabama safety Caleb Downs – one of the most sought-after players in the transfer portal – is committing to Ohio State.

Downs, the reigning SEC Freshman of the Year and leading tackler for the Crimson Tide, entered the transfer portal on Wednesday following the retirement last week of head coach Nick Saban. Ohio State followed up just a day later with an in-home visit, which evidently was enough to convince Downs.

During his standout freshman season, he finished with 107 tackles – 40 more than the next-closest Alabama defender – two interceptions and four pass breakups. He was also named the Shaun Alexander Freshman of the Year, which is given to the best first-year player in all of college football.

A former five-star prospect with three seasons of eligibility remaining, Downs figures in as an immediate starter for Ohio State, which is looking to replace an open starting job at safety following the departure of Josh Proctor. The Buckeyes also return Lathan Ransom and Sonny Styles, who started at safety last season, though Styles could conceivably move to Will linebacker to get Ohio State's best players on the field.

This is Ohio State's second pursuit of Downs, as it originally failed to secure him in the 2023 recruiting class when he originally signed with Alabama. He was then the No. 6 overall prospect and top-ranked safety. Georgia was considered the other option for Downs, both as a recruit and transfer.

Downs is the fifth transfer addition this offseason for Ohio State, joining former Kansas State quarterback Will Howard, former Ole Miss running back Quinshon Judkins, former Ohio university tight end Will Kacmarek and former Alabama teammate and center Seth McLaughlin. Ohio State is also pursuing former Alabama offensive tackle Kadin Proctor, who also entered the transfer portal this week.