

Former USC Guard, Ohio State Target Bronny James Cleared To Play In NBA



Former USC guard Bronny James, the son of NBA legend LeBron James who listed Ohio State as one of his final three schools in his high school recruitment and suffered a cardiac arrest last July, was medically cleared to play in the NBA on Monday and will likely stay in the 2024 NBA Draft.

ESPN Sources with @Draftexpress: In the aftermath of his cardiac arrest and a procedure to repair a congenital heart defect nine months ago, the NBA's Fitness to Play panel has medically cleared USC's Bronny James to be drafted and play in the league. Story soon. pic.twitter.com/P8ci337NrA

— Adrian Wojnarowski (@wojespn) May 13, 2024

According to ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski and Jonathan Givony, the NBA's Fitness To Play Panel's three physicians unanimously approved James to compete, which will allow him to fully participate in this week's pre-draft combine and begin his preparation for a career in the league just under 10 months after his cardiac arrest.

James' cardiac arrest — which was likely due to a congenital heart defect — occurred during a USC team practice on July 24, 2023. The incident hospitalized him for three days and forced him to miss the first seven games of his freshman season. Despite making the speedy return to the court, James struggled to consistently produce in his lone season with the Trojans, averaging 4.8 points and 2.8 rebounds in 19.6 minutes per game.

James' disappointing freshman season prompted him to enter the 2024 NBA draft while maintaining his

collegiate eligibility and also entering the transfer portal, a move that had some Buckeye fans clamoring for the former Ohio native to play for Jake Diebler and Ohio State in 2024-25.

James was heavily recruited by Ohio State and even hosted him — along with LeBron and Savannah James — on a recruiting visit during the Buckeye football team's 2023 home opener against Notre Dame. The Buckeyes also hosted his younger brother, Los Angeles Sierra Canyon four-star shooting guard Bryce James (6-4, 180), on a visit last October.

While Bronny James showed great interest in Ohio State during his high school recruitment out of Sierra Canyon — listing the Buckeyes in his final three along with USC and Oregon — that same interest was not there this offseason.

Instead, Bronny James will likely begin his preparation for the 2024 NBA Draft held from June 26-27 at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York, where he will look to join a league that his father has carved out a Hall of Fame career in for the last 21 seasons, winning four NBA Championships along with another four NBA MVPs and 20 All-Star nods.

According to ESPN's Brian Windhorst, the Los Angeles Lakers — the franchise LeBron James has played for since the 2018-19 season — will likely select Bronny James if they have the opportunity to do so, either with the 55th overall pick in the second round or with another pick acquired via trade.

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