

Ohio State Reportedly Making In-Home Visit With Alabama Transfer Safety Caleb Downs



According to a report from On3's Pete Nakos, Ohio State will conduct an in-home visit on Thursday with highly-touted Alabama transfer safety Caleb Downs.

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 and Georgia are considered the two favorites to land him.

This is Ohio State's second pursuit of Downs, as it failed to secure him as a five-star prospect in the 2023 recruiting class when he originally signed with Alabama. He was then the No. 6 overall prospect and top-ranked safety, and he backed that ranking up last season, finishing with 107 tackles - 40 more than the next-closest Alabama defender - two interceptions and four pass breakups.

Safety is not the biggest position of need for Ohio State - that remains on the offensive line - but a player of Downs' caliber entering the transfer portal can change the calculus for the Buckeyes.

"I think what impresses me most about Caleb Downs is his maturity," Saban said in December. "He's a very instinctive football player, but this guy, there's no arrogance about him, being one of the best players in the country at his position. He's very focused, he's very coachable. He wants to know everything that you can ever tell him about how he can play his position better. He takes coaching well when you talk to him about what he did or didn't do."

According to a report from 247Sports, Downs hopes to arrive at a quick decision so he can get enrolled in classes and begin work with his new team.

"Our time is so short and we don't have time to look at a lot of unknowns," Downs' father, Gary Downs, said. "It has to be previous relationships with people. We want to try and find a place with stability, the same coach and same coordinators, knowing you have to be prepared for change. ... He just turned 19. This is a lot for him to process right now. You don't go into this situation thinking about transferring."