

2021 Virginia Five-Star Cornerback Tony Grimes Lists Ohio State Among Top Schools



As part of his 18th birthday celebration, Virginia Beach (Va.) Princess Anne five-star cornerback Tony Grimes included Ohio State in his top eight on Wednesday evening alongside Clemson, Georgia, North Carolina, Penn State, Tennessee, Texas A&M and Virginia.

Top 8 Schools Blessed ☑☑ @dhglover @Bubblesdnf pic.twitter.com/Ctg5RTq5e6

— Tony Grimes (@757EliteDB) April 9, 2020

The 6-0, 180-pound Grimes — the cousin of linebacker Teradja Mitchell — is considered the top-rated cornerback and No. 7 prospect overall in the class of 2021, as he recorded 48 tackles and four interceptions to lead the Cavaliers to the state playoffs last fall.

Grimes landed an offer from the Buckeyes in May 2019, though its worth noting his relationship with linebackers coach and area recruiter Al Washington dates back more than a year to Washington's time as an assistant at Michigan. He took an unofficial visit to Columbus just a weeks later, during which he spent a considerable amount of time with then-co-defensive coordinator and secondary coach Jeff Hafley.

The two had an instant connection, and that coupled with the noticeable improvement from Ohio State's defensive backs under Hafley's direction last season seemingly put the Buckeyes at the forefront of Grimes' recruitment. But then Hafley's decision in mid-December to become the next head coach at Boston College, as well as the time between his departure and the arrival of new defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs in late January, allowed other programs to make their own push — most notably the Bulldogs.

Grimes visited Georgia for the first time in mid-January, and the program received several 247Sports crystal ball predictions in the days thereafter. Ohio State has been facing an uphill battle ever since, though Coombs started chipping away at that lead when he dropped by Grimes' high school a few days after he was hired.

During that visit, Coombs invited Grimes to return to campus for the annual spring game on April 11. And while that was cancelled amid the coronavirus outbreak, Grimes should — at the very minimum — take an official visit with the Buckeyes before making his college decision on Dec. 1.

Ohio State already holds three commitments at the cornerback position in St. Louis De Smet Jesuit four-star Jakailin Johnson, Nashville Ensworth four-star Andre Turrentine and Cincinnati La Salle three-star Devonta Smith, and plans to add at least one more player to that haul. Other notable names to keep in mind include Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy four-star Kamar Wilcoxson; Bowling Green (Ky.) South Warren four-star Jantzen Dunn; and Katy, Texas, four-star Hunter Washington.

If he does eventually choose Ohio State, Grimes would give the Buckeyes commitments from two of the commonwealth's top three players this cycle, joining Hopewell five-star running back TreVeyon Henderson, who pledged his services on March 27.

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