A Brief Look At OSU's Early Enrollees

Of Ohio State's 20 signees from the 2023 class, 11 have been confirmed to be enrolling early to get a jump-start on their careers as Buckeyes this spring.

BSB wanted to give a rundown of who all is moving into Columbus for the next semester. Here's a brief look at Ohio State's early enrollees from the class of 2023:

Four-star safety Malik Hartford, West Chester (Ohio) Lakota West

Get to know Malik

With a few more dominoes still to fall in OSU's safety room — namely the draft decision of third-year Lathan Ransom — Hartford could be a factor to crack the two-deep as a freshman. Ranked the No. 163 prospect in the country by the 247Sports Composite and the fourth-best player from Ohio, Hartford's range and athleticism make him an asset for the future at either adjuster or bandit.

Four-star cornerback Jermaine Mathews, Cincinnati Winton Woods

Get to know Jermaine

It's no secret how thin Ohio State is at corner entering 2023, with just four scholarship players returning at the position following the NFL declaration of Cameron Brown and transfer of JK Johnson. A late riser in the recruiting rankings, Mathews earned his Ohio State offer with an impressive camp showing this past summer and finished as the No. 136 prospect in the country after being rated outside the top 500 as recently as June 6.

Four-star interior offensive lineman Luke Montgomery, Findlay (Ohio)

Get to know Luke

There's gaps at offensive tackle appearing in the near future for Ohio State, and if that's where Luke Montgomery ends up playing, he could see the field in short order. He's capable of slotting in anywhere on the offensive line, however, and the staff will try to find the spot that best maximizes the capabilities of the talented No. 52 overall prospect in the 2023 class.

Four-star interior offensive lineman Joshua Padilla, Huber Heights (Ohio) Wayne

Get to know Joshua

Unlike Montgomery, the plan for Joshua Padilla at Ohio State is clear at this point. Offensive line coach Justin Frye has made it apparent he's the team's future at center, and he'll have a chance to claim that future as soon as 2024 should current center Luke Wypler depart for the NFL. For now he'll battle with rising fourth-year Jakob James to be Wypler's backup.

Four-star wide receiver Bryson Rodgers, Zephyrhills (Fla.) Wiregrass Ranch

Get to know Bryson

Bryson Rodgers might enter Ohio State as the lowest-rated of wide receiver coach Brian Hartline's four-man haul at the position, rated the No. 325 prospect in the composite, but it wouldn't be the first time Hartline hit a home run on a diamond in the rough (see Chris Olave). Arguably no position room at OSU is deeper or more talented than its receivers unit, however, so it could take some time before Rodgers gets to show the quick-twitch, athletic upside and sharp route running that make him an intriguing prospect.

Four-star wide receiver Noah Rogers, Rolesville (N.C.)

Get to know Noah

Noah Rogers missed the cut to be a five-star prospect in the composite rankings by 10 spots, checking in as the No. 45 prospect in the country and best from the state of North Carolina. Clocked at a sub-4.5 40-yard dash and built with a 6-foot-2 frame, it's easy to see why he cracked the nation's top 50 after catching 1,432 yards and 22 touchdowns worth of passes as a junior.

Four-star interior offensive lineman Austin Siereveld, Middletown (Ohio) Lakota East

Get to know Austin

Rated the No. 249 overall prospect and No. 12 interior offensive lineman by 247, behind both Montgomery and Padilla, Austin Siereveld is likely to spend a few years developing and learning before he has a shot to see the field at Ohio State. As a whole, and especially relative to tackle, the long-term depth on the interior of the offensive line is in good shape for the Buckeyes, given both its gains in the 2023 class and the list of players from 2021 and 2022 including former five-star Donovan Jackson, four-star Ben Christman, four-star Tegra Tshabola and four-star Carson Hinzman. Tshabola and Hinzman both could play tackle or guard moving forward.

Four-star defensive end Will Smith Jr., Dublin (Ohio) Coffman

Get to know Will

An Ohio State legacy, head coach Ryan Day stated on early signing day Dec. 21 that Smith had to earn his offer and his late rise in the composite rankings shows as much. It took him until Oct. 12 to earn his fourth star and he has since cracked the top 300. He picked up 47 tackles, 14 tackles for loss and five sacks as a senior in 2022. Even with the rise, barring something unexpected it will likely take Smith multiple seasons to crack the two-deep with the current depth in the defensive end room.

Four-star wide receiver Carnell Tate, Bradenton (Fla.) IMG Academy

Get to know Carnell

Carnell Tate was one of the more coveted wide receiver prospects in the country, checking in at No. 61 in the composite rankings (247 gave him a five-star designation as its No. 25 prospect nationally) and drawing offers from the likes of Alabama, Georgia, LSU, Michigan and Notre Dame among many, many others. Somehow he's only the third highest-rated of Hartline's four commits at the position, three of which are enrolling early.

Four-star tight end Jelani Thurman, Fairburn (Ga.) Langston Hughes

Get to know Jelani

Auburn made a huge late surge for Jelani Thurman but Ohio State held on to the nation's No. 2 tight end prospect and No. 99 player overall. Standing 6-foot-5 with the athleticism to haul in 36 passes for 582 yards and 12 touchdowns for his 15-0 state-title-winning team in 2022, Thurman has the potential to present huge matchup problems for defenses down the road. With rising fifth-year Cade Stover announcing his return to Ohio State Monday, Thurman is likely to spend a year developing before entering the team's depth chart.

Three-star offensive tackle Miles Walker, Greenwich (Conn.) Brunswick School

Get to know Miles

Miles Walker is the lowest-rated prospect in Ohio State's 2023 recruiting class, but there's a reason Frye pounced on him beyond simply filling a need at offensive tackle. With a 6-foot-6, 285-pound frame and quick feet, Walker has the potential for great upside if developed well over a few years. The track for offensive linemen to see the field in college is often slower than other positions, but Walker could push for playing time by year three if he pops the way the staff hopes.