

Glenville Pipeline Flowing Once Again



From 2002 through 2017, no less than 21 players out of Cleveland Glenville played football for Ohio State.

The high school has produced some of the more recognizable names in recent Buckeye history. Heisman Trophy winning quarterback Troy Smith spent his prep days with the Tarblooders before starting multiple seasons to great success in Columbus. Wide receiver Ted Ginn Jr., arguably the most electric player in team history, was right there alongside him out of Glenville.

Cardale Jones was a three-star out of Glenville who went from Ohio State's third-string quarterback in 2014 to winning three consecutive games in the Big Ten Championship and first-ever College Football Playoff to bring back a national championship after J.T. Barrett went down with injury.

Marshon Lattimore was an All-Big Ten performer at cornerback who's since been to four Pro Bowls in the NFL. Donte Whitner was first-team All-Big Ten at safety and a first-round draft pick.

For years, Glenville had been a steady source of talent for the Buckeyes. But for nine recruiting classes, the well ran dry. The last Tarblooder to sign the dotted line and come to Columbus on scholarship prior to the class of 2023 was offensive tackle Marcelys Jones in 2014, who left the program after one season.

After Saturday, the Buckeyes will likely sign three Glenville prospects over their past two recruiting classes.

Last year brought the signature of linebacker Arvell Reese, a four-star prospect at linebacker who became OSU's only commit at the position in the class. He was ranked 209th nationally in the 247Sports composite and No. 22 at linebacker.

Saturday, however, was an eight-star day for the Glenville-to-Ohio State connection.

Both four-star cornerback Bryce West (5-11, 177) and four-star tight end Damarion Witten (6-4, 215) verbally committed to the Buckeyes on the same day, vaulting the team to second place in the 247Sports composite team rankings.

West was a long-time target of the Buckeyes, and a huge recruiting win as they had to hold off a strong push from archrival Michigan to win his services. The No. 1 prospect in Ohio, West isn't far from having a fifth star next to his name as the No. 49 overall recruit in the composite rankings. He's the nation's

fourth-best corner.

Following the promotion of Keenan Bailey to be Ohio State's full-time tight ends coach, Witten emerged as the assistant's No. 1 priority on the recruiting trail. He told the line-of-scrimmage closer as much.

"The day he got the job, he hit me up and told me, 'I want you. You're No. 1 on my (recruiting) board and I'm not going to stop recruiting you until you're a Buckeye,'" Witten told BSB June 14. "For me, that was a big deal because I've never had anyone tell me that I was No. 1 and that I'm needed."

Witten slots in as the nation's No. 346 prospect, though 247Sports' own rankings have him 197th. He's ranked 19th at tight end and 11th in Ohio.

Depth is another reason why Witten was such a huge priority for the Buckeyes on the trail. They haven't been able to sign two tight ends in a class since 2016, despite multiple efforts to do so. Witten joins Chattanooga (Tenn.) Baylor School four-star Max LeBlanc (6-4, 222) at the position.

Glenville producing Buckeye products once again could yield great dividends for the program in the future. Ohio State's staff is surely happy to have the connection reestablished.