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Star forward Thompkins picks Dogs

By [CHIP TOWERS](#)

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The five-star recruit that has eluded Georgia coach Dennis Felton to date plans to play for the Bulldogs in 2008.

So says Oak Hill Academy's Howard "Trey" Thompkins. The 6-foot-8 power forward from Lithonia, ranked among the top prospects in the country at his position, gave Georgia his verbal commitment on Thursday.

Rivals.com rates Thompkins the No. 6 power forward in the nation and No. 13 college prospect overall in the 2008 class.

"Yes, I committed to Georgia today," said Thompkins, who averaged 15 points and 7 rebounds and shot 67 percent from the field as a junior at Oak Hill last season. "The reason is because I'm a family guy. I liked the fact my home is 45 miles away. And I love Georgia. The situation is right for me."

Thompkins, who played for The Wesleyan School in Norcross as a sophomore before transferring to the national powerhouse that is Oak Hill, has moved back home and plans to return to play for Wesleyan next fall.

"I told my family if we won the national championship at Oak Hill I would come home," Thompkins said. Oak Hill went 40-1 and was declared mythical national champion by USA Today.

Thompkins said chose the Bulldogs over two-time defending national champion Florida. He also had offers from Georgia Tech, Kentucky, Florida State, LSU, Michigan, Wake Forest and UCLA, among others.

Thompkins said he went with Georgia because he likes the direction Felton is taking the program and wants to be instrumental in "helping them get to the Final Four."

"With the right pieces, a few players, I really feel like we can do that," he said. "I'm going to try to get all the 5-star and 4-star players I know to come with me."

Asked whom that might be, Thompkins said: Al-Farouq Aminu, a fellow five-star recruit and former Wesleyan teammate, and Tony Woods, a five-star center from Rome High School in Georgia. Point guard Dustin Ware of North Cobb Christian High is already committed to Georgia for 2008.

If and when he signs a national letter of intent - which can't happen until this November - Thompkins will become the Bulldogs' biggest signee since Louis Williams. Williams, of course, opted instead to go straight to the NBA from high school. That won't be an option for Thompkins. The league now will not draft players until a year after they have graduated from high school.

Thompkins plays AAU basketball for the Atlanta Celtics. He becomes the first player from that program to sign with Georgia since Atlanta's Anthony Evans in 2000 and only the second since Jumaine Jones in 1998.

Thompkins father, Howard Thompkins Jr., was drafted out of Wagner College by the Atlanta Hawks in the 10th round in 1981.

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