



AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION

NEWS RELEASE

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Team Background

The AFCA has selected an All-America team every year since 1945. What makes these teams so special is that they are the only ones chosen exclusively by the men who know the players the best — the coaches themselves.

The five teams now chosen for each AFCA division evolved from a single 11-player squad in 1945. From 1945 until 1967, only one team was chosen. From 1967 through 1971, two teams, University Division and College Division, were selected. In 1972, the College Division was split into College I and College II. In 1979, the University Division was split into two teams — Division I-A and Division I-AA. In 1996, the College I and College II teams were renamed Division II and Division III respectively. The AFCA started selecting an NAIA-only team in 2006.

From 1965-81, a 22-player (11 offensive, 11 defensive) team was chosen. In 1982, a punter and placekicker were added to the team. In 1997, a return specialist was added, giving us the current 25-player team. The return specialist position has been replaced by an all-purpose player this season.

Selection Process

The AFCA's Football Championship Subdivision All-America Selection Committee is made up of three head coaches from each of the AFCA's nine districts, one of whom serves as a district chairman, along with another head coach who serves as the chairman of the selection committee.

The coaches in each district are responsible for ranking the top players in their respective districts prior to a conference call between the district chairmen and the committee chairman on which the team is chosen.

GEORGIA SOUTHERN'S JAYSON FOSTER AND TOWSON'S BRIAN BRADFORD HEADLINE THE 2007 AFCA FCS COACHES' ALL-AMERICA TEAM

WACO, TEX. — Football Championship Subdivision's (FCS) second leading rusher and the nation's second leading tackler headline the American Football Coaches Association 2007 Football Championship Subdivision Coaches' All-America Team announced today.

THE OFFENSE

The runningbacks on the 2007 FCS Coaches' All-America Team are **Chad Simpson** of Morgan State, **Omar Cuff** of Delaware and **Mike McLeod** of Yale. Simpson finished as the MEAC's leading rusher and set a single season school record by accounting for 1,402 yards. He led the MEAC in scoring (90 points), and ranked second in all-purpose yards by averaging 161.8 yards per game. Cuff established new school single season records in 2007 with 377 carries, 1,889 yards, 34 rushing touchdowns and 38 total touchdowns. His 34 rushing touchdowns and 38 total touchdowns this season are both NCAA FCS records. McLeod became Yale's first Ivy MVP since 1987 after running for a school-record 1,619 yards and 23 touchdowns.

The signal caller on this year's squad is **Ricky Santos** of New Hampshire. Santos, the 2006 Walter Payton Award winner, passed for 2,972 yards and 24 touchdowns and finished seventh in the nation in total offense with a 292.3 yards per game average.

Lafayette's **Jesse Padilla**, Weber State's **David Hale**, Northern Iowa's **Chad Rinehart**, South Dakota State's **Mitch Erickson** and Appalachian State's **Kerry Brown** make up the offensive line for 2007. Padilla was a senior member of an offensive line that helped Lafayette average 364.5 yards of offense and 25.5 points per game. Hale helped lead the way for a Weber State offense that averaged 399.6 yards per game, earning him First Team All-Big Sky. Rinehart helped guide the Northern Iowa rush offense to a No. 15 national ranking (227.38 ypg), and a No. 7 national ranking in total offense (457.31 ypg). Erickson anchored a Jackrabbit offensive line that helped produce averages of 34.2 points and 362.5 yards per game. Brown is the only returning AFCA All-America from last year's squad. Brown earned the Jacobs Blocking Trophy, awarded to the Southern Conference's top offensive lineman, for the second-straight year. He helped pave the way for an Appalachian offense that ranked second in total offense at 483.5 yards per game.

The receiving corps on this year's team is **Ryan Maher** of Holy Cross and **Ramses Barden** of Cal-Poly. Maher led the Patriot League in both receptions (6.82 catches per game) and receiving yards (82.5 yards per game). Barden set Cal Poly records for most receiving yards (1,467), points (108) and 100-yard receiving games (7) in a season, and was ranked No. 2 in the nation in receiving yards per game (133.36) in 2007.

THE DEFENSE

The defensive line is headlined by Montana's **Kroy Biermann**. Biermann, a finalist for the Buck Buchanan Award, was among the national leaders with 18 tackles for loss, 15 sacks, and five forced fumbles, as well as 72 total tackles. McNeese State's **Bryan Smith** was named Southland Conference Player of the Year after ranking third in the nation in quarterback sacks (10.5) and finishing as one of the nation's leaders in tackles for a loss (22.5). Gardner-Webb's **Brian Johnston** totaled 74 tackles, 24 tackles for loss and six sacks in 2007, helping lead the 'Dogs to No. 1 in the Big South Conference in total defense. **Kendall Langford** of Hampton led the team in total tackles with 72, and also accumulated 13.5 tackles for a loss and six sacks.

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Western Illinois' **Jason Williams**, Towson's **Brian Bradford** and Prairie View A&M's **Zach East** make up the linebackers on the Coaches' All-America Team. Williams led the Gateway Conference in three defensive categories – sacks (eight), tackles for loss (16.5) and forced fumbles (five), and ranked third in tackles (107 total tackles). Bradford led the Colonial Athletic Association in tackles with 149 and finished No. 2 in the nation at 13.55 tackles per game. He was also the CAA co-leader with four forced fumbles. East finished third in the nation in tackles per game with 12.5, and finished the season with 127 total tackles, 14.5 tackles for a loss and three sacks.

Derrick Huff of Eastern Kentucky leads a group of four talented defensive backs on the All-America team. Huff tied for the national lead in interceptions with nine, earning him Ohio Valley Conference Defensive MVP honors. **Al Donaldson** of Alabama A&M was the other co-leader in interceptions, as he totaled nine in 11 games to go along with his 51 tackles and 11 pass breakups. James Madison's **Tony LeZotte** recorded 88 tackles this season, including 48 unassisted, and he has two interceptions and eight pass deflections. **Steven Williams** of Harvard led the Ivy League and ranked fourth nationally with eight interceptions, tying Harvard's single season mark. He also led the nation in passes defended with 23.

THE SPECIALISTS

Georgia Southern's **Jayson Foster** is this year's all-purpose player. One of three Payton Award finalists, Foster ranked fifth nationally in all-purpose yards per game at 189.09. He rushed for 1,844 yards, passed for 1,206 yards and totaled 171 yards in returns while also scoring 30 touchdowns. In 2007, punter **Chris MacDonald** of Texas State led the nation with a 45.92 yards per punt average. Of MacDonald's 49 punts, 19 were over 50 yards. Placekicker **Piotr Czech** of Wagner was 16 of 19 on field goal attempts and 27 of 28 on PATs this season. He earned First Team All-Northeast Conference honors at both placekicker and punter and finished second on the team in scoring with 75 points.

2007 AFCA FCS Coaches' All-America Team

Offense

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	School	Coach	Hometown (High School)
WR	Ryan Maher	6-1	184	Sr.	Holy Cross	Tom Gilmore	Boca Raton, Fla. (Boca Raton)
WR	Ramses Barden	6-6	228	Jr.	Cal Poly	Rich Ellerson	Altadena, Calif. (Flintridge Prep)
OL	Jesse Padilla	6-5	310	Sr.	Lafayette	Frank Tavani	Hawthorne, N.J. (Hawthorne)
OL	David Hale	6-6	305	Sr.	Weber State	Ron McBride	Plain City, Utah (Fremont)
OL	Chad Rinehart	6-5	308	Sr.	Northern Iowa	Mark Farley	Boone, Iowa (Boone)
OL	Mitch Erickson	6-6	285	Sr.	South Dakota State	John Stiegelmeier	Hutchinson, Minn. (Hutchinson)
OL	Kerry Brown*	6-6	310	Sr.	Appalachian State	Jerry Moore	Marietta, Ga. (Lassiter)
QB	Ricky Santos	6-2	215	Sr.	New Hampshire	Sean McDonnell	Bellingham, Mass. (Bellingham)
RB	Chad Simpson	5-10	210	Sr.	Morgan State	Donald Hill-Eley	Miami, Fla. (Edison)
RB	Omar Cuff	5-10	195	Sr.	Delaware	K.C. Keeler	Landover, Md. (C.H. Flowers)
RB	Mike McLeod	5-11	200	Jr.	Yale	Jack Siedlecki	New Britain, Conn. (New Britain)

Defense

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	School	Coach	Hometown (High School)
DL	Bryan Smith	6-3	230	Sr.	McNeese State	Matt Viator	Newton, Texas (Newton)
DL	Kroy Biermann	6-3	241	Sr.	Montana	Bobby Hauck	Hardin, Mont. (Hardin)
DL	Brian Johnston	6-5	280	Sr.	Gardner-Webb	Steve Patton	San Diego, Calif. (Madison)
DL	Kendall Langford	6-6	294	Sr.	Hampton	Joe Taylor	Petersburg, Va. (Petersburg)
LB	Jason Williams	6-3	225	Jr.	Western Illinois	Don Patterson	Chicago, Ill. (DuSable)
LB	Brian Bradford	6-2	235	Sr.	Towson	Gordy Combs	Germantown, Md. (Gaithersburg)
LB	Zach East	6-2	230	Sr.	Prairie View A&M	Henry Frazier III	Houston, Texas (Yates)
DB	Tony LeZotte	6-0	200	Sr.	James Madison	Mickey Matthews	Augusta, Ga. (Westside)
DB	Steven Williams	5-11	190	Sr.	Harvard	Tim Murphy	San Antonio, Texas (Taft)
DB	Derrick Huff	5-11	188	Sr.	Eastern Kentucky	Danny Hope	Hamilton, Ohio (Hamilton)
DB	Al Donaldson	5-10	170	Jr.	Alabama A&M	Anthony Jones	Crawfordville, Fla. (Wakulla)

Specialists

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	School	Coach	Hometown (High School)
P	Chris MacDonald	6-4	215	Sr.	Texas State	Brad Wright	Mesa, Ariz. (Red Mountain)
PK	Piotr Czech	6-5	210	Sr.	Wagner	Walt Hameline	Keyport, N.J. (Keyport)
AP	Jayson Foster	5-9	164	Sr.	Georgia Southern	Chris Hatcher	Canton, Ga. (Cherokee County)

*-2006 AFCA All-American

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Top Teams: Eastern Kentucky has been represented a total of 23 times by 21 players on the AFCA FCS Coaches' All-America Team since 1979. The Colonels are followed by Delaware (17/14), Appalachian State (17/13), Montana (16/16), Georgia Southern (16/12), Furman (15/14), Youngstown State (14/13), Northern Iowa (14/11), Grambling State (13/12), Cal Poly (12/11), Jackson State (12/11), Stephen F. Austin (12/11), Northwestern State (12/10), Eastern Illinois (11/10), Weber State (11/10) and Western Kentucky (11/10) among current FCS schools.

Top Conference: The Colonial Athletic Association (formerly Atlantic 10) (98 appearances/89 players) is tops among all FCS conferences on the AFCA FCS Coaches All-America Team since 1979. Following the CAA is the Southern (92 appearances/80 players), Gateway (66/61), Ohio Valley (57/53), Big Sky (56/56), Southland (55/51), Southwestern Athletic (45/43), Patriot (42/41), Mid-Eastern Athletic (28/26), Ivy League (26/26), Pioneer (11/11), Northeast (11/9), Great West (7/7), Big South (5/5) and Metro Atlantic Athletic (5/4). These totals reflect FCS selections only from current conference members. Several schools had additional players chosen when they played in divisions other than FCS.

2007 Conference-by-Conference Breakdown: Colonial Athletic – 4; Big Sky – 2; Gateway – 2; Great West Football – 2; Ivy – 2; Mid-Eastern Athletic – 2; Patriot – 2; Southern – 2; Southland – 2; SWAC – 2; Big South – 1; Northeast – 1; Ohio Valley – 1.

First Time Schools: Offensive Lineman **Mitch Erickson** of South Dakota State and linebacker **Zach East** of Prairie View A&M are the first players from their respective schools to earn AFCA FCS Coaches' All-America honors. South Dakota State previously had nine players selected to AFCA Coaches' All-America teams when they were a member of NCAA Division II.

Consecutive Years: Eastern Kentucky leads all schools, having had at least one player named to the AFCA FCS Coaches' All-America Team in each of the first 15 years a FCS team was chosen (1979-93).

Repeat After Me: Offensive lineman **Kerry Brown** of Appalachian State is the only repeat selection from last year's FCS Coaches' All-America team. Linebackers **Gary Reasons** of Northwestern State (La.) (1981-83) and **Dexter Coakley** of Appalachian State (1994-96) are the only three-time AFCA All-Americans in the FCS.

Yearly Leaders: Grambling (1979-DL **Joe Gordon**, LB **Aldrich Allen** and DB **Robert Salters**) and Jackson State (1996-QB **Grailyn Pratt**, LB **Otha Evans** and DB **Sean Woodson**) are the only schools to have more than two players named to the AFCA FCS Coaches' All-America Team in one year.

One Player, Two Schools: Punter **Mark Bounds** is the only player to earn Coaches' All-America honors at two different schools. He was named to the AFCA College Division I team in 1990 while playing for West Texas A&M. He transferred to Texas Tech after West Texas dropped football and earned FBS All-America honors as a Red Raider in 1991.

Class Distinction: This year's AFCA FCS Coaches' All-America Team is made up of 21 seniors and four juniors.

For more information on the AFCA and its programs log on to the AFCA's website at www.afca.com.

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