



The National Football League held its annual college player draft last week, and eight former Mid-American Conference players were selected by NFL teams. After the draft, 27 former MAC players were signed to free agent contracts, and at least one was invited to an NFL rookie camp. Pictured is the top former MAC player chosen, Miami RedHawk Brandon Brooks.

The top pick was Miami Offensive Lineman **Brandon Brooks**, who was drafted by the Houston Texans in the third round, 76

th
overall.

Brooks was selected to play in the East-West Shrine Game and was a second-team All-Mid-American Conference selection each of the last two years at Miami. He was a member of the 2010 Miami team that won the MAC Football Championship Game with a 26-21 win over Northern Illinois and went on to win the 2011 GoDaddy.com Bowl with a 35-21 win over Middle Tennessee State.

With the 84
th

pick, the Baltimore Ravens drafted Temple Running Back **Bernard Pierce**

. Pierce declared for the draft following his junior season after becoming Temple's all-time leader in rushing touchdowns (53), total touchdowns (54), and points scored (324). He also set the season records for rushing TDs (27), total TDs (27), points scored (162), and 100-yard rushing games (9), while setting game records for rushing TDs in a game (5 at Maryland) and points scored (30 at Maryland). Pierce finished the 2011 season with 1,481 yards on 273 carries and 27 touchdowns for an average of 123.4 yards per game and ranked second in the nation with 27 rushing touchdowns, second in the country in scoring (13.5 ppg) and seventh in

rushing (123.4 ypg).

In the fourth round, the Chicago Bears took Temple Tight End

**E
van Rodriguez**

111th overall.

Rodriguez, a two-time first-team All-Mid-American Conference selection, played in all 13 games with 12 starts at tight end in 2011. Rodriguez was named to the Mackey Award Watch List, as he led the Owls with 479 yards and two touchdowns on 35 receptions in 2011.

Onto the fifth round, where the Detroit Lions tabbed Temple Linebacker **Tahir Whitehead** 138th overall.

Whitehead, a team captain for Temple in 2001, played in all 12 games with 11 starts at Sam linebacker. Whitehead was named to the Butkus Award Watch List, and ranked third on the team in the regular season with 59 tackles, a team-best 12.0 TFL for a loss of 64 yards, five sacks, four forced fumbles, and three fumble recoveries.

In the sixth round, the Indianapolis Colts chose Ohio Wide Receiver

LaVon Brazill

206th overall.

Brazill set the single season school record in 2011 for yards receiving (1,146), receptions (74) and touchdowns (11) en route to earning All-MAC honors. He is also the school's all-time career leader in receptions (189) and yards receiving (2,511). His 18 career touchdowns rank second to Terrence McCrae (19). Brazill closed out the year by surpassing 100 yards receiving in seven of the Bobcats' final 10 games, including Ohio's final game in the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl, where he recorded 108 yards receiving to earn Most Valuable Player honors to propel the Cats to their first-ever bowl victory.

Fast forward to the seventh round, where the New York Jets selected Western Michigan Wideout **Jordan White** 244th overall. White leaves Western Michigan as the program's first consensus All-American and the first player in program history to be named first-team Walter Camp All-American. Last season, White led the nation with 140 receptions, 1,911 receiving yards, 10.8 receptions per game and 147.0 receiving yards per game. A native of Cleveland, White set career school records for career receptions (306), career receiving yards (4,187), while also setting the school's single-season marks for receptions (140), receiving yards (1,911), touchdown receptions (17), and 100-yard receiving games in a season (10). White also set the school single-game record for receptions (16) and receiving yards (265). White also left his mark on the MAC as the conference all-time career leader in receiving yards (4,187) and tied for the conference mark for career receptions (306).

With the 251

st

pick, the Buffalo Bills took another Bronco, Kicker

John Potter

Potter laid claim to the Western Michigan record book during his career. Not only is he the program's all-time leading scorer (333), he is also the program and MAC record holder in consecutive PATs made in a career (129). He broke his own PATs made in a season record in 2011 with 57, besting his previous mark of 54 set in 2010. Potter has made nine PATs in a game twice, eight once and seven, three times in his career. He also has the fifth most field goals in a career (16) in program history. On top of all of that, Potter is a gamer, as the program's record holder for tackles by a specialist with 36 stops on special teams in his career.

The Indianapolis Colts made Northern Illinois Quarterback **Chandler Harnish** the 253rd overall and 'Mr. Irrelevant' pick. Harnish was named an honorable mention All-American by SI.com after a record-setting 2011 campaign and stellar four-year career at Northern Illinois. Harnish threw for 3,216 yards and 28 touchdowns while completing 237-of-384 passes (61.7 percent) and rushed for a team-leading 1,379 yards on 194 carries with 11 touchdowns. He averaged 7.1 yards per carry and was the top rushing quarterback in the country this season. Harnish's 4,595 yards of total offense were the fourth-highest total in the Football Bowl Subdivision in 2011. He is one of only four FBS quarterbacks all-time to throw for more than 3,000 yards and rush for more than 1,000 in a single season with his rushing totals higher than any other signal-caller to accomplish the feat.

Harnish also won the Vern Smith Leadership Award as the MAC's Most Valuable Player and was the league's Offensive Player of the Year. A semifinalist for the Walter Camp Player of the Year Trophy, he was one of 16 individuals across all divisions of college football to be named a National Football Foundation Scholar-Athlete, earning an \$18,000 post-graduate scholarship.

After the draft, the NFL teams had a feeding frenzy of undrafted free agents, and the former MAC gridiron gang was no exception as the following players went to the following teams: Akron OL Jake Anderson, Cleveland Browns

Bowling Green OL Ben Bojicic, Cincinnati Bengals

Bowling Green WR Kamar Jordan, Minnesota Vikings

Buffalo WR Marcus Rivers, Minnesota Vikings

Kent State C Chris Anzevino, Baltimore

Kent State DT Ishmaa'ily Kitchen, Baltimore

Kent State WR Sam Kirkland, Washington Miami WR Chris Givens, New Orleans Northern Illinois C Scott Wedige, Arizona

Northern Illinois WR Nathan Palmer, San Francisco

Northern Illinois LB Pat Schiller, Atlanta Ohio WR Phil Bates, Seattle

Ohio P Paul Hershey, Kansas City

Ohio LB Noah Keller, St. Louis Temple OL Pat Boyle, Detroit

Temple DE Morkeith Brown, Tampa Bay

Temple OL Derek Dennis, Miami

Temple LB Stephen Johnson, New Orleans

Temple DE Adrian Robinson, Pittsburgh

Temple WR Rod Streater, Oakland

Temple OL Wayne Tribue, Denver Toledo WR Eric Page, Denver

Toledo TE Danny Noble, Tampa Bay

Toledo OL Mike VanDerMeulen, Tampa Bay

Toledo DB Desmond Marrow, Houston

Toledo OL Philipkeith Manley, Atlanta Western Michigan DL Drew Nowak, Jacksonville Rep
orted training camp invitees:

Buffalo NT Richi Smith, NY Jets