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Contact: Michael Preston
781-363-0305 / MP@MPrestonSports.com

Coach Mark Guandolo Names 34 Players From Broward And Miami-Dade Counties To Team USA Football Roster

TEAM USA FOOTBALL Head Coach Mark Guandolo has selected the majority of his roster from Broward and Miami-Dade counties for the NFL Global Junior Championship XI to be played at Lockhart Stadium in Fort Lauderdale on January 31 and February 3.

Coach Guandolo and his coaching staff met with the players who will have the honor of representing the United States against the national junior teams of Canada, Japan, France, Mexico and Panama on Monday night. Having received a commitment from 34 student athletes who were nominated by their own head coaches, Guandolo named those players to his roster. Six more players will be added before the January 8 deadline for all teams' rosters to complete the 40-man squad.

"When I first agreed to coach Team USA Football I thought that with all the all-star games we'd have trouble filling the team," said Guandolo. "But there's been great interest and a lot of top players have wanted to be a part of it.

"We've had great support from the local coaches in the two counties and almost 300 nominations. We have put together a good team that represents both counties equally."

Quarterbacks

Derek Rifenbury, Monarch
Marc Ende, Pine Crest
Travaris Cadet, Miami Central

"The quarterbacks are very good athletes who throw the ball well and I think it's important that they can also scramble and make something happen when the play isn't there. Rifenbury and Cadet threw for a lot of yards on successful teams this year."

Running backs

Gordon Warner, Miami Central
Justin Lee, Boyd Anderson
Junior Allen, Western RB/WR
Bo Williams, Northeast
James Maitland, Northeast FB

More...



Michael Preston 781-363-0305
Patrick Steenberge 817-219-7274
Website: www.NFL-GJC.com





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"We have a lot of speed and some small backs and one big back in Bo Williams. They are versatile because several can also go out and play a slot receiver and are also kick returners."

Wide receivers

Jason Frierson, Coral Gables

Tight ends

Michael Hellman, Everglades

"Jason is really quick and runs great routes and has exceptional hands and he can do it all, so we're excited about him. We also have a couple of big time defensive backs who can fill the receiver spot and will look for more receivers from our final six selections."

Offensive Line

Ryan Goldman, Chaminade-Madonna

Juan Gonzalez, Columbus

Ernest Goodley Jr., South Plantation

Emeka Nwankwo Chaminade-Madonna

Joseph Martin-Culet, Coconut Creek

Saf Ahmad, Miami Norland

Ladevan Kirkland, Miami Washington

"We've got a good mix of size and tough kids who can really play. We have a 6-2, 220 pounds lineman in Kirkland and also Nwankwo, who is going to Notre Dame. Some kids might be seen as being a little undersized but they have had great seasons for their high schools and I'm happy that they get to show their talents in this game."

Defensive Line

Danny Thompson Jr., Cypress Bay

Martin Wright, Miami Washington

Terrance Blakely, Coconut Creek

Adewale Ojomo, Hialeah

Joshua Stanley, Ely

Jason Paul-Pierre, Deerfield Beach

"Our defensive ends are probably the most talented area on the team. Ojomo is committed to the University of Miami, Wright looks like he's headed to Florida and Paul-Pierre was Deerfield Beach's top defensive end. So we have some great rush guys to come off the edge and put pressure on the quarterback."



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Linebackers

Antonio White, Miami Washington
Reginald Sandilands, Miami Northwestern
James Kirk, Miami Varela
Patrick Grant Boyd, Anderson

"This is a good solid group and Reggie Sandilands comes from the 6A state champions Miami Northwestern."

Defensive Backs

Deleon Gause, Miami Central
Charles James Jr., Northeast
DeMarcus Van Dyke, Miami Pace
Bryan Blanford, Hialead DB/WR
Eian Smith, Chaminade-Madonna
Dahrnaz Tigner, Ely

"This is a really talented group. We have good cover corners and hard hitting safeties. Van Dyke is probably one of the best corners in the state of Florida."

Specialists

Tom Picinic, Coral Glades P/K

"Picinic is a great punter and kicker, so we're hoping he can do both duties to save us a roster spot, which is important when you have 40 players."

Team USA will practice for the NFL Global Junior Championship XI from January 16-20 and January 22-27. All practices are scheduled to be at Florida International University. Times and the schedule for the week of January 29-February 2 will be confirmed in the New Year.

Tournament organizer Patrick Steenberge said of the selections: "I was impressed with coach Guandolo's thorough approach to selecting his roster in the way that he has insisted on meeting the players who will pull on the Team USA Football shirt before naming them to his roster. Because some schools have already closed for the holidays and some seniors have other school commitments, a handful of players were unable to attend the meeting, so coach is holding fire on naming them to his roster."

Tickets for the NFL Global Junior Championship cost \$5 per day and are available from local schools Cardinal Gibbons, Pine Crest, North Broward Prep, Western High, University and Chaminade-Madonna Preparatory, with all proceeds benefiting those schools.



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