



“YA LYUBLYU FOOTBALL!”

With the number of American football fans around the world continuing to grow, it’s a phrase being uttered more and more in every corner of the globe – “I love football,” or in Russian, “Ya lyublyu football.”

That is the native language of one of the NFL’s up-and-coming young defensive players, San Diego Chargers defensive end **IGOR OLSHANSKY**, the first player born in the former Soviet Union to play in the NFL.

Olshansky, entering his second season, was born in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine and came to the United States with his family at age seven. He became one of the highest foreign-born draft choices in NFL history in 2004 when the Chargers selected him in the second round. Olshansky first played organized football in his junior year at St. Ignatius High School in San Francisco, where his family arrived in 1989 with \$500 in their pockets, developing into a versatile performer along the defensive line at Oregon.

“Football is the best thing that has ever happened to me,” says Olshansky, who started all 16 games for the AFC West champions last year. “It’s provided such a great opportunity for me and my family. I’m very grateful.”

Added his sister, Marina, a San Francisco chiropractor, “This is a country of opportunity. It’s all proven – we lived it.”

SOME COMMON FOOTBALL PHRASES...IN RUSSIAN!

Phrase	Russian Translation	Phrase	Russian Translation
First down	<i>Pervaja popitka</i>	Defensive end	<i>Pozitsija zashchitu</i>
Play them one game at a time	<i>Delat pospeshno</i>	Most popular sport in America	<i>Samij popyljarinj sport v Amerike</i>
Hard-nosed player	<i>Ypornij igrok</i>	Head coach	<i>Glavnij trener</i>
Prevent defense	<i>Slomat zashchity</i>	Undefeated season	<i>Sezon bez porazhenij</i>

Other players born outside the United States are also seeking to make their mark. In Kansas City, Chiefs rookie running back **SAM GADO** was signed by the team as a free agent. A native of Nigeria, Gado was nicknamed the “Nigerian Nightmare,” after his idol, **CHRISTIAN OKOYE**. Gado, who played collegiately at Liberty, hopes to ultimately become a doctor and eventually return to Nigeria.

“He has exceeded our expectations in every area,” says Chiefs offensive coordinator **AL SAUNDERS**. “He’s just a ball of energy.”

In Tennessee, Swedish kicker **OLA KIMRIN** is trying to earn the Titans kicking job, while in New York, Australian punter **BEN GRAHAM** is aiming for a permanent position with the Jets. German defensive end **CONSTANTIN RITZMANN** will begin his second season with the Buffalo Bills in 2005 after earning a roster spot as an undrafted free agent in 2004.

FOREIGN-BORN PLAYERS IN THE NFL IN 2005

COUNTRY	PLAYER(S)
AMERICAN SAMOA	DE Jonathan Fanene, Cin; G Toniui Fonoti, SD; DE Shaun Nua, Pit; DE Anton Palepoi, Den; TE Gabe Reid, Chi; DT Joe Salave’a, Was; DT Junior Siavii, KC; DT Isaac Sopoaga, SF
AUSTRALIA	P Darren Bennett, Min; P Ben Graham, NYJ
CAMEROON	DE Adrian Awasom, NYG; T Roman Oben, SD
CANADA	S Oshiomogho Atogwe, StL; P Mitch Berger, NO; WR Nate Burleson, Min; RB Kerry Carter, Sea; C JP Darche, Sea; DT Israel Idonije, Chi; TE Teyo Johnson, Oak; LB Mike Labinjo, Phi; C LP Ladouceur, NO; RB Jesse Lumsden, Sea; DE Rob Meier, Jac; G Steve Morley, GB; G Tom Nütten, StL; QB Jesse Palmer, NYG; WR Brock Ralph, NYJ; C Brett Romberg, Jac; K Shaun Suisham, Pit; K Mike Vanderjagt, Ind
CONGO	DE Alain Kashama, Chi; DE Patrice Majondo-Mwamba, Den
CZECH REPUBLIC	T Will Svitek, KC
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	WR Carlos Perez, Phi
ENGLAND	LB Aden Durde, Car; CB Domonique Foxworth, Den; LB Lorn Mayers, DAL; DE Osi Umenyiora, NYG
ESTONIA	T Michael Roos, Ten
FINLAND	TE Klaus Alinen, Atl; DT Michael Quarshie, Oak
GHANA	DE Ebenezer Ekuban, Den; T William Obeng, Min; LB Andre Sommersell, Ind
GERMANY	S Kevin Curtis, Oak; DE John Engelberger, Den; LB DD Lewis, Sea; G Peter Heyer, KC; CB Ray Mickens, NYJ; DE Christian Mohr, Sea; S Claudius Osei, TB; RB Ray Perkins, SD; RB Tony Richardson, KC; DE Constantin Ritzmann, Buf; TE Tony Stewart, Cin; WR Reggie Williams, Jac; S Richard Yancy, SD
GUYANA	WR Keron Henry, NO
JAMAICA	CB Dwight Anderson, StL; QB Rohan Davey, NE; RB Dahrran Diedrick, Was; RB Omar Easy, Oak; T Kwame Harris, SF; LB Roger Knight, NO; T Damion McIntosh, Mia; RB Ian Smart, TB; LB Jermaine Taylor, TB
LIBERIA	S Bhawoh Jue, SD; RB Thomas Tapeh, Phi
MEXICO	G Rolando Cantu, Ari; T Victor Leyva, NE; WR Hugo Lira, Car
NIGERIA	LB Patrick Chukwurah, Den; LB Isaiah Ekejiuba, Ari; CB Abraham Elimimian, SD; RB Samkon Gado, KC
NORWAY	DE Anders Akerstrom, NO
POLAND	K Sebastian Janikowski, Oak
PHILIPPINES	C Eugene Amano, Ten
SCOTLAND	K Lawrence Tynes, KC
SIERRA LEONE	CB BJ Tucker, Sea; S Madiou Williams, Cin
SOUTH AFRICA	WR Jerome Pathon, Sea
SPAIN	CB Jon Pendergrass, Hou
ST. KITTS	DE Erasmus James, Min
SWEDEN	K Ola Kimrin, Ten
TRINIDAD	G Anthony Herrera, Min
TONGA	DT Maake Kemoeatu, Bal
UKRAINE	DE Igor Olshansky, SD
VIRGIN ISLANDS	S Hanik Milligan, SD

