

NFL PLAYERS ENROLL AT HARVARD & WHARTON BUSINESS SCHOOLS

Education is a key component of [The NFL Player Development Department](#). Rookies are schooled at the Rookie Symposium every June and veterans attend classes through the Continuing Education Program each offseason. This year for the first time, the NFL and NFL Players Association teamed up with two prominent business schools to create a curriculum for players to participate in executive education programs.

Sixty-six players attended three-day sessions at Harvard Business School and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania this spring. Topics covered included “Cash Flow vs. Profitability – Sustaining Growth,” “Introduction to Entrepreneurship,” and “Ethics and Successful Business Venturing.”

“As a professional athlete, you never feel you have prepared enough for your opponent,” said Houston Texans tight end **MARK BRUENER**, who attended the Wharton program. “This is an opportunity for me to educate myself for the real world.”

Green Bay Packers defensive end **KABEER GBAJA-BIAMILA** valued the Harvard program. “Now I know what level of risk I should consider and am able to ask questions that give me a much better understanding of what I would be getting into,” he said. “When I leave the NFL, I am going to have a lot of my life left to live. I want to make myself a success in the business world.”

Other players who attended included NFL All-Stars **DREW BREES** of the San Diego Chargers, **BRIAN DAWKINS** of the Philadelphia Eagles, and **AHMAN GREEN** of the Packers and three members of the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots -- defensive back **JE’ROD CHERRY**, tight end **CHRISTIAN FAURIA** and linebacker **TED JOHNSON** (now retired).

The programs are part of an ongoing NFL-NFLPA initiative to assist players in preparing for their post-playing careers. Tuition was covered by the NFL’s Tuition Reimbursement Program in which veteran players may be reimbursed for up to \$15,000 per league year for education expenses at an accredited institution of higher learning. [Following is a typical day of the NFL program at the Wharton School:](#)

Time	Session
7:00-8:00 AM	Breakfast
8:00-9:30 AM	Planning for Your Future: Agenda & Goal Setting
10:00-11:30 AM	Investments and Scams
11:45 AM-1:00 PM	The Stock Market Alternative (Working Lunch)
1:30-3:00 PM	Starting a Business: Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship
3:30-5:00 PM	Entrepreneurial Legal Concerns: Securities Regulation Taxation and Real Estate
6:00-7:00 PM	Dinner
7:00-8:00 PM	Starting a Business (Story from an entrepreneur)

FROM PLAYERS TO ZEBRAS

They went over to the other side!

This spring, five NFL players learned what it is to be an on-field football official as part of the **NFL EUROPE LEAGUE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**. Joining another 23 current and former players who served as coaching or operations interns, the five learned the ins-and-outs of officiating during three scrimmages.

“I’m serious about this, and believe me, it’s hard work,” said New England Patriots safety **RODNEY HARRISON**, an 11-year NFL veteran who worked primarily at the back judge position. “As an official, you’ve got to concentrate on so many different things that you never have to worry about as a player.”

For the third consecutive year, the NFLEL Internship Program, a joint effort of the NFL and the NFL Players Association, provided a group of current and former players with comprehensive training, work experience and evaluation of their coaching and officiating skills.

“This is a tremendous opportunity for players to develop other skills and pursue other career goals,” said **ART SHELL**, NFL senior vice president of football operations and development and a Hall of Fame offensive lineman who went on to become an NFL head coach. “The program provides our players – active or retired – with the chance to find out whether coaching, officiating, or front office work in the NFL is for them.”

The program has been successful in helping past players transition into a life after playing football. Four previous participants have earned full-time positions with NFL teams: Oakland special teams assistant coach **MARTIN MAYHEW**, Cleveland tight ends coach **BEN COATES**, San Diego assistant defensive backs coach **ALBERT LEWIS**, and Indianapolis offensive quality control coach **PETE METZELAARS**.

As Harrison learned through his experience in the officiating program, it’s good for players to experience different professions to prepare them for when their playing days are over. “You try new things,” says Harrison. “This gives me a way to stay close to the game and interact with the players.”

[Following are the five NFL players who had officiating internships as part of the 2005 NFLEL Internship Program:](#)

Player	NFL Team
Rodney Harrison	New England Patriots
Raylee Johnson	Denver Broncos
Fred McCrary	Atlanta Falcons
Shelton Quarles	Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Grey Ruegamer	Green Bay Packers

