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ONWARD FROM EUROPE... NFL EUROPE LEAGUE'S BEST SEEK BERTHS IN NFL

They have done it in Europe, now it's time to do it at home.

The NFL Europe League concluded its 14th season on May 27 when the Frankfurt Galaxy defeated the Amsterdam Admirals 22-7 in World Bowl XIV in front of 36,286 fans in Düsseldorf, Germany.

The Europe League's class of 2006 now seeks to use the experience it gained abroad this spring to win a job in the NFL. That quest begins in earnest next month when NFL teams gather for training camps in late July.

"We have so many young, talented players who get an opportunity to play in Europe, to mature and to develop," says NFL Commissioner **PAUL TAGLIABUE**, who attended World Bowl XIV with NFL All-Stars **BRIAN DAWKINS** and **MICHAEL STRAHAN** before visiting injured U.S. soldiers at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

"It's very important for people to see how these players do in game conditions," says Tagliabue. "There were many players in the World Bowl who will follow in the footsteps of those who first achieved success in NFL Europe before accomplishing great things in the NFL."

In 2005, 235 players with NFL Europe experience appeared on NFL rosters, including four Pro Bowlers – quarterback **JAKE DELHOMME**, guard **BRIAN WATERS**, defensive tackle **LA'ROI GLOVER** and punter **BRIAN MOORMAN**.

So who's next?

A position-by-position preview of the 2006 NFL Europe standouts to watch in NFL training camps this summer:

QUARTERBACK – DREW HENSON, Dallas/Rhein

Henson compiled a 6-3 record in nine starts for the Rhein Fire, tying for second in the league with 10 touchdown passes. The former Michigan quarterback tossed only three interceptions in 203 attempts for an NFL Europe-best 1.5 interception percentage. Through the years, NFL Europe quarterbacks have made a big impression back home, as 27 of them have gone on to start in the NFL. "The thing I needed was in-game repetition and that in itself is a positive," Henson says. "I wanted to enjoy the NFL Europe experience and get better each day. I went into it with that mindset and I feel I improved my game since the NFL season ended."

From NFL Europe QB to the NFL: **JAKE DELHOMME, BRAD JOHNSON, JON KITNA, KURT WARNER.**

RUNNING BACK – FRED JACKSON, Buffalo/Rhein; ROGER ROBINSON, Arizona/Frankfurt

Robinson led the Galaxy to a championship, rushing for 1,087 yards in nine games, the most in the 14-year history of NFL Europe. The former Northern Arizona star faces a crowded depth chart at running back for the Cardinals, but feels his NFL Europe tenure better prepares him for an NFL career. "It was a blessing for me to play in NFL Europe," Robinson says. "I feel like I left Europe a better player. Arizona is where I want to be and I want to be a Cardinal. But the way the National Football League works, NFL Europe can serve as an audition for 32 teams".....Jackson was the league's No. 2 rusher with 731 yards, averaging 4.7 yards per carry – second only to Robinson's 5.1 among NFL Europe's top five rushers.

From NFL Europe RB to the NFL: **AARON STECKER, MAURICE HICKS.**

WIDE RECEIVER – SKYLER FULTON, Seattle/Amsterdam; CHAD LUCAS, Green Bay/Amsterdam

Fulton and Lucas were a formidable duo for the Admirals, helping the team to a second consecutive World Bowl appearance. Fulton set the NFL Europe single-season record with six 100-yard receiving games, leading the league with 53 receptions and 992 yards. He hopes to achieve his NFL breakthrough with his hometown team, as he attended Capital High School in Olympia, Washington. “What is going to help Skyler is his confidence from going to Europe and leading the league,” says Seahawks receivers coach **NOLAN CROMWELL**. “He has confidence coming into camp that he can make plays”Lucas displayed a knack for finding the end zone, leading NFL Europe with eight touchdowns. He hopes those achievements aid his quest to win a roster spot in Green Bay. “I feel I can run, catch and run good routes,” says Lucas. “Hopefully I’ve improved. I’ve learned defensive coverages and I want to show the Packers’ coaches that they can be comfortable putting me on the field.”

From NFL Europe WR to the NFL: BRIAN FINNERAN, DANTE HALL, MARCUS ROBINSON.

OFFENSIVE LINE – WILL SVITEK, Kansas City/Frankfurt; KYLE TAKAVITZ, Cincinnati/Hamburg

Svitek started 9 of 10 games for the Galaxy and was named to the All-NFL Europe League team. Compared by some scouts in ability to **MATT LEPSIS**, the Broncos’ tackle who emerged from NFL Europe in 1998 to start every game in Denver from 1999 through 2005, Svitek played a key role in helping Roger Robinson set the league season rushing record. “Will has been very, very consistent,” says Chiefs President **CARL PETERSON**. “And very, very good.”Takavitz started all 10 games at guard for Hamburg, helping the Sea Devils surrender a league-low 12 sacks.

From NFL Europe OL to the NFL: JOE ANDRUZZI, MATT LEPSIS, MARCO RIVERA, BRIAN WATERS.

TIGHT END – JASON RANDALL, Atlanta/Berlin; KEITH WILLIS, Seattle/Frankfurt

The 6-5, 275-pound Randall started seven of 10 games for Berlin, posting 17 catches for 203 yards and two touchdowns. “We followed Jason closely while he was in NFL Europe and we liked what we saw,” says Falcons tight ends coach **CLANCY BARONE**. “We had an opportunity to evaluate the areas he excelled in and what things he needed to work on for when he joined us in camp. Just like any position, the competition is tough, but Jason is up for the challenge” Willis played in all 10 games for the Galaxy, finishing with 18 receptions for 290 yards and one touchdown, averaging a team-leading 16.1 yards per catch while displaying solid blocking ability.

From NFL Europe TE to the NFL: BRYAN FLETCHER, DANIEL WILCOX.

DEFENSIVE LINE – TONY BROWN, Carolina/Amsterdam; JEROME NICHOLS, Green Bay/Frankfurt

Brown helped anchor the Admirals’ defense, registering 40 tackles and 4.0 sacks in 10 games, earning NFL Europe Co-Defensive Player of the Year honors. “I came to NFL Europe with one goal in mind, playing consistently every down,” says Brown. “I believe things worked out well for me.”Nichols played a pivotal role for the league’s top defense, finishing the season as the NFL Europe leader with 7.0 sacks and totaling 29 tackles, earning all-league honors in the process. He aims to break into a Green Bay defensive line rotation that already includes Europe League alum **CULLEN JENKINS**, who has played in every game for the Packers since 2004 after spending that spring with Cologne.

From NFL Europe DL to the NFL: LA’ROI GLOVER, KELLY GREGG, CULLEN JENKINS.

LINEBACKER – TRAVIS HARRIS, Free Agent/Frankfurt; KEVIN HARRISON, Free Agent/Berlin

A pair of free agents were among the most impressive linebackers in Europe this spring. Harris started all 10 games for the top-ranked Galaxy defense, finishing as the club’s top tackler with 61. Harrison played in every game for Berlin, starting the last five contests en route to a 61-tackle campaign, good for second on the team. Both players are aiming to follow the example of linebackers that came before them. Last season, linebacker **RICH SCANLON** earned NFL Europe Defensive Most Valuable Player honors for Berlin before playing in every game for the Chiefs. In 2004, Cleveland’s **MASON UNCK** was a standout linebacker in Frankfurt, using the experience to win a job with the Browns.

From NFL Europe LB to the NFL: RICH SCANLON, DONNIE SPRAGAN, MASON UNCK.

DEFENSIVE BACK – KEVIN CURTIS, Houston/Cologne; ANTWAN ROGERS, Denver/Berlin

Curtis started all 10 games at safety for Cologne, playing a major factor as the Centurions finished the season with the league's best pass defense. His four interceptions tied for second in the league. The former Texas Tech standout is eager to compete for a roster spot in Houston.....Rogers started nine of 10 games for Berlin, posting 39 tackles and seven passes defended. He's hoping to become the next in a line of Broncos defensive backs to have gone from NFL Europe to NFL success. Current Seattle cornerback **KELLY HERNDON** spent 2000 in Barcelona before earning a job in Denver from 2002-04, playing in 45 games with six interceptions. Broncos safety **NICK FERGUSON** spent the 1999 and 2000 seasons with the Rhein Fire, using that experience to earn a job with the Jets before joining Denver in 2003.

From NFL Europe DB to the NFL: KEITH DAVIS, NICK FERGUSON, KELLY HERNDON.

KICKER – RYAN KILLEEN, Seattle/Amsterdam

Killeen connected on 14 of 17 field goals and 29 of 29 extra points, leading NFL Europe in scoring with 71 points. "The Seahawks told me they would like to see me be more consistent on my field goals," Killeen said. "I'm really glad I went to NFL Europe because I had a great opportunity to compete and now the Seahawks have 11 game films of me in action." Killeen hopes to follow in the footsteps of the most famous kicking product to toil in Amsterdam, Indianapolis' Adam Vinatieri, who led the 1996 Admirals in scoring before winning the kicking job in New England.

From NFL Europe K to the NFL: DAVID AKERS, LAWRENCE TYNES, ADAM VINATIERI.

PUNTER – GABE LINDSTROM, Seattle/Cologne

Lindstrom led NFL Europe with a 36.2-yard net punting average and finished second in the league with a 41.6-yard gross average, pinning opponents inside the 20-yard line 15 times. Lindstrom hopes that production will enable him to compete for the Seahawks' punting job in training camp with Wake Forest draftee **RYAN PLACKEMEIER**.

From NFL Europe P to the NFL: CHRIS HANSON, BRIAN MOORMAN, SCOTT PLAYER.

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