

INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE



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Not only have the Eagles experienced unprecedented success as a team, Eastern players have earned some of the greatest individual accolades in college football.



WR Cooper Kupp celebrates a touchdown at Washington State in 2016.

4

Walter Payton Award winners
(FCS Most Outstanding Offensive Player)

2

Buck Buchanan Award winners
(FCS Most Outstanding Defensive Player)

1

Jerry Rice Award winner
(FCS Most Outstanding Freshman)

181

First Team FCS All-America honors
367 combined All-America honors
among 95 different players

15

Big Sky Offensive MVP awards
(1997, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010,
2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 [2], 2020-21, 2021)

5

Big Sky Defensive MVP awards
(1993, 1997, 2005, 2008, 2010)

8

Big Sky Coach of the Year awards
(1992, 1997, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2012, 2013, 2018)

148

First Team All-Big Sky honors

WALTER PAYTON AWARD WINNERS

Eastern Washington is the only university in the country to boast four winners of the Walter Payton Award, given annually to the top offensive player in the FCS. Only one other school (Villanova) has three, and all other Big Sky programs have five combined.

2021 – Eric Barriere, QB

Barriere threw for 5,070 yds, 46 TDs and 8 INTs as red-shirt-senior after finishing as a runner-up the year prior.

2015 – Cooper Kupp, WR

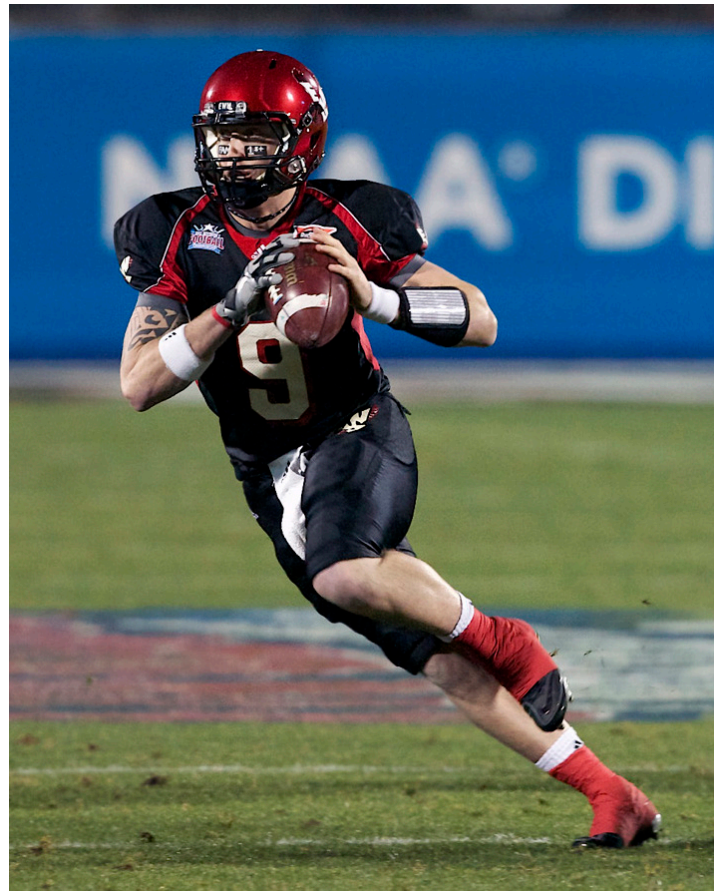
Kupp piled up 114 rec, 1,642 yds, 19 TDs as redshirt-junior. He was a runner-up the next season despite equally monstrous numbers (117 rec, 1,700 yds, 17 TDs). Kupp is the only non-QB to win the award since 2004.

2011 – Bo Levi Mitchell, QB

Led the FCS in four categories, including passing yards (4,009) and TD passes (33), breaking four school records.

2005 – Erik Meyer, QB

Eastern's first Walter Payton Award winner, Meyer set the FCS record for career passing efficiency rating (166.5), throwing 84 TD to just 17 INTs.



Bo Levi Mitchell in the 2010 National Championship Game. (Keith Currie)



Erik Meyer takes a snap vs. Portland State in 2005.

BUCK BUCHANAN AWARD WINNERS

While the Eagles have gained well-deserved attention for high-flying offenses, Eastern has produced top-end performers on the defensive side of the ball as well. EWU is one of only 7 schools (5 current FCS) to produce 2+ Buck Buchanan Award winners, recognizing the top defensive player in the FCS.

2010 – J.C. Sherritt, LB

A four-year player at Eastern, Sherritt ranked 3rd in the FCS in tackles in 2010 (150; 11.5 per game), including 18 in the national championship game, marking the 7th-most in school history. He actually led the FCS in tackles the year prior (170) and went on to a successful career in the CFL, winning a Grey Cup with Edmonton in 2015.

2008 – Greg Peach, DE

Peach was the first Eagle to earn the Buck Buchanan Award after racking up 72 tackles (35 solo), 23.5 tackles for loss, 18 sacks, a pass break-up and fumble recovery in 2008. He remains the EWU career leader in sacks with 35.5.



Greg Peach (right) celebrates a sack in 2007.



J.C. Sherritt pursues the ball against Montana in on Sept. 10, 2010. The Eagles won, 36-27, holding the Griz to 6 points in the 2nd half.

DEDICATION IN THE CLASSROOM



Center Spencer Blackburn on the sideline in 2019. He went on to become a William V. Campbell trophy finalist.

Not only have the Eagles displayed excellence on the field, they have consistently shown their dedication in the classroom, earning some of the NCAA's most prestigious academic awards. In 2019, center **Spencer Blackburn** was selected to the 2019 National Football Foundation National Scholar-Athlete Class and was one of 12 finalists for the William V. Campbell Trophy, awarded by the NFF to the college football player with the best combination of academics, community service, and on-field performance. It is considered by many to be the "Academic Heisman" and nicknamed as such. Other notable academic honors for the program include but are not limited to:

- **CSC (formerly CoSIDA) Academic All-America First Team – 7 times**
WR Cooper Kupp (2016 & 2015), DE Jacob Kragt (2009), WR Kyler Randall (2003 & 2002), DE Steve Mattson (1997), WR Jeff Ogden (1997)
- **CSC Second Team Academic All-America Second Team – 6 times**
WR Cooper Kupp (2014), S Jeff Minnerly (2012), TE Lance Ballew (2000), RB Mike MacKenzie (1998), DE Steve Mattson (1996), DB Kurt Schulz (1991)
- **CSC All-District VIII Team – 70 times**
- **NCAA FCS Athletic Directors Academic All-Star Team – 25 times**
Most recently P Nick Kokich in 2022, LB Jack Sendelbach in 2020-21 and the pair of C Spencer Blackburn and S Dehonta Hayes in 2019.
- **Big Sky All-Academic Team – 602 times since 1996**
- **Big Sky Scholarship Athlete of the Year – 17 times**
Most recently K Roldan Alcobendas (2018-19) and WR Cooper Kupp (2016-17)

BIG SKY ALL-ACADEMIC SELECTIONS

(2001-2022 football; current members)

Eastern Washington	534
Montana	414
Weber State	379
Montana State.....	336
Idaho State	323
Portland State	263
Northern Arizona	262
Northern Colorado*	235
Sacramento State	222
UC Davis#	123
Idaho&	115
Cal Poly#	68

**Since 2006-2007*

#Since 2012-13

&Since 2018

EAGLES IN THE PROS



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Kupp carries the ball down the sideline vs. Portland State in 2015.



Kupp warms up at Washington on October 11, 2020. (All-Pro Reels Photography)

COOPER KUPP

Wide Receiver – Los Angeles Rams – EWU 2013-16

No other former FCS player has more national name recognition right now than Eastern Washington's **Cooper Kupp**, and for good reason.

It's hard to imagine a more prolific collegiate career than Kupp's. The Eagle legend was a Walter Payton Award winner, two-time FCS Athletic Directors Offensive Player of the Year, Jerry Rice Award winner, two-time Big Sky Offensive Player of the Year, four-time first-team All-American, and named the STATS FCS Player of the Decade.

At Eastern, Kupp rewrote the record books from 2013-16, establishing 15 FCS, 11 Big Sky and 26 EWU marks. He pulled in an incredible 428 catches for 6,464 yards and 73 touchdowns in 52 games played from 2013-16. Those numbers obliterated the existing FCS records of 395 receptions (Terrell Hudgins, Elon, 2006-09) and 58 touchdowns (David Ball, New Hampshire, 2003-06). **His yards mark stands alone among all divisions of NCAA football**, besting a record set in 1999 by Scott Pingel of Division-III Westminster College.

He was selected in the 3rd round (69th overall) of the 2017 NFL Draft by the Los Angeles Rams, becoming EWU's 2nd-highest draft pick behind only Michael Roos (41st overall in 2005). He enters his 7th season with the Rams in 2023.

As a professional, Kupp has continued to dominate, becoming one of the most feared receiving threats in the NFL.

In 6 seasons with Los Angeles, he has played in 80 games, starting 66, racking up 6,329 yards receiving on 508 catches while scoring 46 touchdowns. Since joining the league, he ranks 6th amongst all NFL receivers in receptions, 8th in touchdowns and 7th in receiving yards.

His career highlight to-date was the 2021 campaign, during which he led the entire NFL in all three primary receiving categories, scoring 16 touchdowns on 145 receptions and 1,947 yards. The catches and yards numbers were both Rams franchise records and the "Triple Crown" achievement was the first in the NFL since 2005. He also set several NFL records, including most yards from scrimmage by a wide receiver and the 1st-ever receiver with 2,000+ receiving yards combined between regular season and postseason.

Kupp was named a 2021 First Team All-Pro and NFL Offensive Player of the Year. He added MVP honors in Super Bowl LVI, during which he pulled in 8 receptions for 92 yards and 2 TDs including the game-winning score with 1:25 left in regulation. The Rams beat Cincinnati, 23-20.

In 2022, Kupp was ranked by his fellow NFL peers as the #4 player in the entire league.



KENDRICK BOURNE

Wide Receiver – N.E. Patriots – EWU 2013-16

One of five Eagles to appear in a Super Bowl, Bourne went undrafted after a prolific Eastern career from 2013-16, during which he was a three-time All-Big Sky selection and went 39-straight games with at least 1 catch. Bourne formed an incredible duo with Kupp as the two played together in each of Bourne's 52 career games (32 starts).

As a pro, he signed a free agent deal with San Francisco in 2017 and played 4 seasons with the 49ers before signing a 3-year deal with New England in 2021. In 91 career NFL games entering 2023, he has racked up 227 receptions for 3,003 yards and 17 TDs, highlighted by an 800-yard, 5-TD campaign in 2021 with the Patriots.



SAMSON EBUKAM

Defensive End – Indianapolis Colts – EWU 2013-16

An All-American in 2016, a Freshman All-American in 2013 and a three-time All-Big Sky selection, Ebukam had 24 sacks in his career to rank sixth in school history. He finished with 188 total tackles in 53 games (38 as a starter).

He was selected in the 4th round (125th overall) of the 2017 NFL Draft by the L.A. Rams and has been a regular NFL contributor ever since, making 56 starts in 91 games between the Rams (4 years) and San Francisco 49ers (2), recording 220 tackles (134 solo) and 22 sacks, with at least 3 sacks in each of the last 5 seasons. Prior to the 2023 season, Ebukam signed a 3-year contract with the Indianapolis Colts.



TAIWAN JONES

Running Back – Buffalo Bills – EWU 2008-10

Originally recruited as a cornerback, Jones switched to running back as a redshirt sophomore and never looked back, becoming an All-American and Big Sky Offensive Player of the Year. Jones averaged 7.7 yards per carry in 24 games as an Eagle from 2008-10, serving a critical role on the 2010 National Championship team. He finished 4th in the Walter Payton Award voting.

He was drafted in same slot as Ebukam – 4th round, 125th overall – just 6 years earlier in 2011 to the Oakland Raiders. He has enjoyed a long NFL career, entering 2023 with 137 games played, primarily as a returner.



NSIMBA WEBSTER

Wide Receiver – Chicago Bears – EWU 2015-18

A speedy receiver originally from Antioch, Calif., Webster piled up 156 catches, 2,233 receiving yards and 18 touchdowns as an Eagle from 2015-18, with each mark standing inside the Top 20 in program history upon his departure. His most-memorable performance came in December 2018 when he tied the Eagle single game record with 4 TD receptions in an FCS Playoffs win over Maine, also tying the FCS Playoffs single game record.

Undrafted out of college, Webster signed a free agent deal with the Los Angeles Rams and has since had stops in San Francisco and Chicago. He has appeared in 29 career NFL games, mostly on special teams as a returner while adding 2 catches for 14 yards.

OTHER CURRENT PROS

Bo Levi Mitchell (EWU 2010-11)
Quarterback – Hamilton Tiger-Cats (CFL)

Vernon Adams Jr. (EWU 2012-14)
Quarterback – B.C. Lions (CFL)

T.J. Lee III (EWU 2010-13)
Cornerback – B.C. Lions (CFL)

Eric Barriere (EWU 2017-21)
Quarterback – New Jersey Generals (USFL)



Pictured right: Kendrick Bourne with the 49ers in 2020.

All players listed under their current or most-recent professional team as of time of publication.

PLAYING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL



EAGLES IN THE PROS

Eastern Washington has a long tradition of making a mark at the next level, with the program's first player drafted way back in 1959, in a 12-team event marking the last NFL Draft before the arrival of the rival AFL in 1960. Since then, 17 more Eagles have heard their name called on the biggest stage.

EAGLES IN THE NFL DRAFT (18)

PLAYER (EWU)	ROUND	OVR	YEAR	TEAM
Michael Roos, OT (2001-04)	2nd	41st	2005	TEN
Cooper Kupp, WR (2013-16)	3rd	69th	2017	LAR
Samson Ebukam, DE (2013-16)	4th	125th	2017	LAR
Taiwan Jones, RB (2008-10)	4th	125th	2011	OAK
Trent Pollard, OT (1990-93)	5th	132nd	1994	CIN
Bob Picard, WR (1968-72)	6th	132nd	1973	PHI
Matt Johnson, S (2008-11)	4th	135th	2012	DAL
Tom Ackerman, G (1992-95)	5th	145th	1996	NO
Dan Curley, TE (1998-02)	5th	148th	2003	STL
Jeff Mickel, OT (1985-88)	6th	163rd	1989	MIN
Ed Simmons, OT (1983-86)	6th	164th	1987	WSH
Scott Garske, TE (1971-73)	7th	179th	1974	PIT
Lamont Brightful, WR (1998-01)	6th	195th	1974	BAL
Kurt Schulz, DB (1988-91)	7th	195th	1992	BUF
Dick Nearents, OT (1956-58)	18th	205th	1959	GB
Jake Rodgers, OT (2013-14)	7th	225th	2015	ATL
Dave Svendsen, WR (1966-68)	11th	281st	1969	LA
Craig Richardson, WR (1983-96)	11th	298th	1987	KC



Roos during a preseason game with the Tennessee Titans. (Joe Howell / AP)

MICHAEL ROOS

Offensive Tackle – Tennessee Titans – EWU 2001-04

A bastion of stability of longevity, Eagle legend **Michael Roos** retired in 2015 after a superb 10-year NFL career, all with the Tennessee Titans after becoming the highest-ever draft pick out of Eastern Washington in 2005, going in the 2nd round (41st overall).

A four-year player for the Eags from 2001-04, Roos anchored the offensive line for 35-straight games, earning All-America and FCS Lineman of the Year honors as a senior.

He was a three-time All-Pro with the Titans and started each of the 226 games he played, including 190-straight from 2002-12.

Outside of his on-field acumen, Roos has been a model citizen, role model and supporter of Eagle Athletics. Among several philanthropic endeavors, he and his wife Katherine provided the principal donation for the Red Turf Project, leading the way for the installation of the infamous Inferno playing surface.

His number 71 was retired in 2009 and Eastern's home field was re-named in his honor in 2010. Roos was inducted to the EWU Athletics Hall of Fame in 2016 and the Big Sky Hall of Fame in 2023, joining EWU volleyball player Kim Exner.

92

Eagles drafted or signed by NFL or CFL clubs since 1989

18

Eastern Washington players drafted to the NFL

10

Participants in the NFL Scouting Combine since 2003