



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 4, 2021

FOUR PLAYERS ADDED TO ROSTERS FOR 2021 SEASON THROUGH INTERNATIONAL PLAYER PATHWAY PROGRAM

Four teams will carry an additional international player on their practice squads in 2021 as part of the International Player Pathway program, the NFL announced today. Instituted in 2017, the program aims to provide elite international athletes the opportunity to compete at the NFL level, improve their skills, and ultimately earn a spot on an NFL roster.

Player	Position	Country	NFL CLUB
Aaron Donkor	LB	Germany	Seattle Seahawks
Alfredo Gutierrez	OL	Mexico	San Francisco 49ers
Max Pircher	OL	Italy	Los Angeles Rams
Bernhard Seikovits	TE	Austria	Arizona Cardinals

The four NFC West clubs will carry these players on their roster until the end of training camp. At that time, the players are eligible for an international player practice squad exemption, granting the team an extra practice squad member that is ineligible to be activated during the 2021 season.

“The International Player Pathway Program provides athletes with a viable route to the NFL and an opportunity to further develop their skills,” said **Damani Leech**, NFL Chief Operating Officer of International. “We are excited to welcome the 2021 class to the NFL and continue growing the game globally.”

The NFC West was chosen to receive these players in a random draw. This becomes the fifth division to participate in the program.

Donkor, Gutierrez, Pircher and Seikovits received additional training alongside NFL players and draft hopefuls in Florida at IMG Academy this winter.

Additionally, four players that participated in the program in 2020 will rejoin their NFC East teams – Isaac Alarcon (Dallas Cowboys), David Bada (Washington Football Team), Matt Leo (Philadelphia Eagles) and Sandro Platzgummer (New York Giants). This is in addition to Christian Wade (Buffalo Bill) and Durval Nieto Queiroz (Miami Dolphins), who are set to enter their third year of the program with their AFC East teams.

The new players taking part in the 2021 International Player Pathway Program:

AARON DONKOR, LB (Germany) – Seattle Seahawks

A native of Germany, played with the German Football League’s Dusseldorf Panthers in 2016. In 2017, joined the New Mexico Military Institute. Saw action in 12 games over two seasons and accumulated 32 tackles, 12.5 sacks, 4.5 tackles for loss, two fumble recoveries and one forced fumbles. Transferred to Arkansas State for his remaining eligibility and posted 25 tackles during the 2019 season.

ALFREDO GUTIERREZ, OL (Mexico) – San Francisco 49ers

Grew up playing youth football in Mexico before moving to the U.S. Upon graduating high school, Gutierrez enrolled in junior college before returning home to Mexico and joining Tec de Monterrey on a full athletic scholarship. Graduated from Tec de Monterrey, where he won a National Championship in 2019.

MAX PIRCHER, OL (Italy) – Los Angeles Rams

After attending a Swarco Raiders football game in Austria, Pircher tried out for the very same team that introduced him to the game. He tested out positions such as tight end and defensive end before settling on offensive line. During the 2019 season, Pircher was named the starting right tackle for the Swarco Raiders and also played on the Italian National Team (Blue Team). Pircher has since moved on to play for the Hildesheim Invaders in Germany, where he balances playing football and attending school.

BERNHARD SEIKOVITS, TE (Austria) – Arizona Cardinals

Seikovits was first introduced to football when he started playing flag football at age 10. After his two-year introduction to the sport and its style of play, he transitioned to tackle football with the Vienna Vikings youth team at the age of 12. Seikovits was selected as a quarterback for the Austrian U19 national team when he was 16-years old. During his time in the program, he competed in two world championships and won a European championship. Following discussions with his coaches, Seikovits began transitioning to the wide receiver position. The position change did not slow him down, as he was selected to the men's national team at the age of 21, which he is now a captain of.

Sammis Reyes, who was also competing for a position in this year's International Player Pathway Program, was signed by the Washington Football Team in April.

SAMMIS REYES, TE (Chile) – Washington Football Team

Played basketball while growing up in Chile. Reyes moved to the United States at age 13 to attend high school. Practiced as a tight end with his high school football team while also playing basketball. Went on to play collegiate basketball for the Tulane Green Wave.

###

Contact:

Taylor Kielpinski-Rogers, Taylor.Kielpinski-Rogers@nfl.com