

NAMES TO KNOW-MAC

NORTHERN ILLINOIS HUSKIES

Top Play: WR Tyrice Richie

Potential Bust: RB Harrison Waylee

Sleeper: WR Trayvon Ruddolph

Impact Transfer: QB Rocky Lombardi

Dynasty Prospect: RB Harrison Way-lee

Fantastic Freshman: RB Antario Brown



QB position is still a question mark again this year for Northern Illinois but even Ross Bowers was sufficient enough to provide support for WR1 **Tyrice Richie** who became a bonafide star in CFF, accumulating 53 receptions on 72 targets and four TDs in just six games. All MAC schedule which needs to be noted to provide context, but Richie topped double-digit fantasy points every week and accounted for 35 percent of the target share. Best suited for PPR formats, but a value WR2 or WR3 on any fantasy roster. From all reports, **Harrison Waylee** had a big spring, with head coach Thomas Hammock stating he saw the sophomore back break off 50+ runs multiple times during camp. Biggest trepidations with Waylee are size and an incoming recruit by the name of **Antario Brown**. A former South Carolina commit, NIU was able to secure a commitment from Brown despite his offer sheet having all P5 schools on it. Why? Not sure the reasoning, but at 205 pounds with a reported 4.5 40-yard dash, Brown seems like a commit that could have an immediate impact and extreme long-term value. I would handcuff Waylee with Brown in all formats if roster sizes allow for it. Trayvon Rudolph finished second on the team with 31 targets as a freshman but only converted to catches 45 percent of the time. Speed to burn, though, as Rudolph was one of the best kick returners in the nation, averaged 24 yards per return. Maybe he can turn that physical talent into a being a formidable receiver. I'm just not sure if new starting QB **Rocky Lombardi**, formerly of Michigan State, is capable of supporting two fantasy-relevant receivers in this offense, even with dropping down a level to the MAC. The backfield of Waylee and Brown are the best prospects on the team from a dynasty perspective as this is a run-heavy offensive system.

BALL STATE CARDINALS

Top Play: WR Justin Hall

Potential Bust: RB Will Jones

Sleeper: WR Yo'Heinz Tyler

Impact Transfer: WR Jayshon Jackson

Dynasty Prospect: RB Rico Barfield

Fantastic Freshman: QB Kiae Kelly



I can't think of a WR in all of college football that has been as consistent over the last four years than **Justin Hall** who is the active leader in FBS with 257 career receptions. Assuming he remains healthy, 60 receptions is a near lock, and Hall was well on his way to topping that benchmark with 49 catches in just seven games in 2020. His counterpart, **Yo'Heinz (ketchup) Tyler**, finally had his breakout season as he tallied a receiving touchdown in every game played. Ball State brought in Cincinnati transfer **Jayshon Jackson** this offseason and could potentially fill Hall's role in the slot in 2022 if we are looking ahead in dynasty formats. Ball State RBs aren't being drafted in redraft formats, but Ball State appears intent on rolling out Will Jones and Tye Evans in a shared backfield. Don't view either player as being a Caleb Huntley-type back, handling 20 carries a game, so I'll avoid altogether. Incoming FR **Rico Barfield** will be a name to know in the coming years. Already 215 pounds, Barfield played in one of the most talented backfields in high school football last season with the likes of Taj Butts (Missouri) and Darez Snider (Miami-Ohio). Drew Plitt will eventually retire from collegiate athletics, and incoming FR **Kiae Kelly** will have a shot at the job in 2022 – offers from Illinois, Indiana, Coastal Carolina and Liberty.

TOLEDO ROCKETS

Top Play: RB Bryant Koback

Potential Bust: n/a

Sleeper: WR Isaiah Winstead

Impact Transfer: QB Tucker Gleason

Dynasty Prospect: RB Micah Kelly

Fantastic Freshman: RB Trenton Adkins



Regardless of how “talented” you think **Bryant Koback** is, it’s all about the volume and his involvement in all aspects of the Toledo offense. 20 carries per game on average in six games last season and his increased usage in the passing game (24 rec. two TDs) makes him an extremely valuable asset in CFF. With Shakif Seymour no longer on the roster, that usage should remain in the same ballpark, though this is a system that typically employs two RBs on a frequent basis, so expect sophomore **Micah Kelly** (4.73 YPC) to have a role, with the potential of starting in 2022 if Koback tries his luck with the NFL. WR1 **Isaiah Winstead** is being largely ignored in my standard and bestball drafts at the moment, and probably shouldn’t be after leading the team with 25 receptions and a 17.1 YPC average. Three TDs and two 100-yard performances in the last three games. **Carter Bradley** will step into the QB1 spot after Eli Peters medically retired from football and could be great value late for a Toledo team that’s averaged 30 passing attempts per game in nine of the last 10 years. Job isn’t locked up yet, but most suspect Bradley will be the guy. Primary challenger to Bradley could be Georgia Tech transfer and former 3-star recruit **Tucker Gleason** who threw for 2,000 yards and rushed for over 1,000 yards in his junior season of high school, and will have four years remaining of eligibility so could be a long-term stash in dynasty. Running back **Trenton Adkins** was one of the highest-rated recruits in the Toledo class and had an offer sheet featuring West Virginia, North Carolina, Penn State, and Tennessee among other P5 schools. Could push for the RB2 job as immediately as this year. Don’t see a potential bust for Toledo at the moment with Koback being the only Rocket being drafted in most formats.

EASTERN MICHIGAN EAGLES

Top Play: QB Preston Hutchinson

Potential Bust: WR Hassan Beydoun

Sleeper: WR Tanner Knue

Impact Transfer: QB Ben Bryant

Dynasty Prospect: RB Darius Boone Jr.

Fantastic Freshman: WR J.B. Mitchell



Think Brennan Armstrong, but in the MAC. That’s what we have with **Preston Hutchinson** who averaged 30+ FPPG in 2020 and his worst performance was the opener against Kent State where he still recorded three touchdowns. Hutchinson averaged north of 30 passing attempts per game and hit double-digit carries in every contest. The only trepidation with Hutchinson is Athlon listing him as the QB2 behind Cincinnati transfer **Ben Bryant**. Over the years, you learn to take some of this stuff with a grain of salt considering that was probably filled out by an Eastern Michigan journalism student, but there is mention of a possible QB competition here. File that away for when we get to fall camps. WR1 **Hassan Beydoun** averaged over 10 targets a game with 40 catches in five contests, but I would caution thinking he could hit 70-80 receptions this season. WR1s in this system average just 46 receptions over the last seven seasons with no receiver topping 61 catches in a single year so Beydoun doubling his production from last year would be an extreme outlier from what we’ve seen in the past. At 5-foot-8, Beydoun won’t be hauling in many touchdown receptions either. Walk-on **Tanner Knue** finished second on the team in receptions (27) and targets (43), and was the team leader in touchdowns (4). EMU is lacking depth at the WR position so expect heavy volume for that receiving duo. Rarely target RBs in this system, averaging just 142 carries per season with Hutchinson vulturing much of that volume, but redshirt freshman **Darius Boone Jr.** is the projected starter as of now with five returning offensive linemen.

CENTRAL MICHIGAN CHIPPEWAS

Top Play: RB Lew Nichols III

Potential Bust: WR Kalil Pimpleton

Sleeper: RB Kobe Lewis

Impact Transfer: QB Jacob Sirmon

Dynasty Prospect: RB Lew Nichols III

Fantastic Freshman: RB Irone Jackson



Watching **Lew Nichols III** and **Kobe Lewis** last season, the discrepancy in talent between the two is notable, with Nichols III averaging almost a full two yards per carry more on the ground. While we project Nichols as the lead back here, you can make the argument Lewis might be the better value of the two, currently sitting at RB50 in Fantrax's ADP vs. RB42 for Nichols. We are just two years removed from when CMU had two 1,000-yard backs in 2019, and both will be heavily involved both on the ground and as receivers as the duo combined for 27 receptions on 33 targets in six games. Four starters are back on the offensive line that ranked 64th in line yards and was the fourth best run blocking group in the MAC. The general public seems to be down on WR1 **Kalil Pimpleton** who currently sits at WR51, which is 25 spots lower than my personal rankings at WR26. After notching 80 receptions in 2019, Pimpleton's production took a hit last season with the dismal play at quarterback. Whether he returns to his 2019 form will depend on how the QB position plays out this summer between the plump Daniel Richardson and Washington transfer **Jacob Sirmon**. RBs are who we want to target long-term in Jim McElwain's system and incoming FR **Irone Jackson's** offer sheet is littered with P5 offers from North Carolina, Florida State, Nebraska and Pittsburgh. Could slot in behind Nichols in 2022 with Lewis being a senior.

WESTERN MICHIGAN BRONCOS

Top Play: RB La'Darius Jefferson

Potential Bust: RB La'Darius Jefferson

Sleeper: WR Jaylen Hall

Impact Transfer: WR Bryce Nunnelly

Dynasty Prospect: n/a

Fantastic Freshman: WR Henry Wilson



Tremendous depth in the WMU backfield, but **La'Darius Jefferson** closed the year on a high note with four rushing touchdowns and three 100-yard rushing performances in the final month of last season. His 223-pound frame is perfectly suited for bullying porous MAC defenses, but you'd be mistaken to neglect the loaded backfield that also features Sean Tyler and Jaxson Kincaide who are both more than capable of stealing carries. Jefferson averaged 24 carries a content in the final month, but that was also due to Tyler being injured. Carries were evenly distributed in the first two weeks when all three backs were available. WR2 **Jaylen Hall** is not D'Wayne Eskridge but his big-play ability (26.9 YPC) can be directly correlated to his QB Kaleb Eleby who averaged 11.1 yards per attempt in 2020. DaShon Bussell moved over to defense this spring so the WR3 job is completely up for grabs at the moment. FCS transfer **Bryce Nunnelly** is my projected favorite to win the job as he accumulated 138 receptions in his last two full seasons with Tennessee-Chattanooga. That kind of production doesn't happen by accident. There isn't anyone here I'm targeting from a dynasty perspective, but WMU could lose two starters at WR after this season, and incoming FR **Henry Wilson** was the team's highest-rated recruit in this year's class.

BOWLING GREEN FALCONS

Top Play: RB Terion Stewart

Potential Bust: RB Terion Stewart

Sleeper: WR Tyrone Broden

Impact Transfer: QB Drew Gunther

Dynasty Prospect: RB Jaison Patterson

Fantastic Freshman: QB Tucker Melton



Just one viable CFF option from Bowling Green this year in bowling ball **Terion Stewart** who averaged eight yards an attempt with four rushing touchdowns in three games. Game scripts work against him with Bowling Green likely to be trailing in most contests, but this is a system that have shown it will feed the RB1 in the past under head coach Scot Loeffler with the likes of A.J. Dillon (Boston College) and Virginia Tech (Travon McMillan). Offensive line ranked 38th in line yards nationally last season and quotes from the coaches seem to think this will be a better group moving forward. Stewart's ADP of RB44 makes him a potential bust candidate with players like Zach Evans, Jalen Mitchell and Charles Williams being drafted after him. No idea how the WR room shakes out here, and probably doesn't matter with Matt McDonald throwing them passes with his unorthodox motion. 6-foot-4 **Tyrone Broden** is the only returning starter at receiver. Two incoming recruits are being projected as immediate backups this season with RB **Jaison Patterson** and QB **Tucker Melton**. Interest levels for this entire offense, this year and beyond, are low.

AKRON ZIPS

Top Play: RB Teon Dollard

Potential Bust: RB Teon Dollard

Sleeper: WR George Qualls Jr.

Impact Transfer: RB Anthony Williams

Dynasty Prospect: WR Tony Grimes

Fantastic Freshman: WR Jasaiah Gathings



The **Teon Dollard** arrest from March puts a cloud over his value this season, suspended indefinitely according to his head coach, but he is currently still listed on the roster and have to assume he will play at some point in 2021. Dollard's value will most likely come during the MAC portion of the schedule so a 3-4 game suspension doesn't hurt his standing drastically. No other RB carried the ball more than seven times a year ago, but Akron did add to the room in the offseason, bringing in Michigan State transfer **Anthony Williams Jr.** who could start the year in Dollard's place during the inevitable suspension. Don't think any of the potential Akron starting QBs will be good enough to support a WR being drafted in redraft formats, but I like the starting trio here of **George Qualls Jr.**, **Tony Grimes Jr.**, and Michael Mathison. Qualls probably has the highest upside of the three at 6-foot-2, a YPC average of 13.3 and aDOT at 12.6. Incoming FR **Jasaiah Gathings** made some waves in spring ball, and should be on the opening week two-deep.

OHIO BOBCATS

Top Play: RB De'Montre Tuggle

Potential Bust: RB De'Montre Tuggle

Sleeper: WR Isiah Cox

Impact Transfer: n/a

Dynasty Prospect: WR Aramoni Rhone

Fantastic Freshman: TE Bryce Butler



If you've listened to any podcasts I've been featured in recently, then you know by now my trepidations with starting running back **De'Montre Tuggle** and his current ADP of RB22. Just once in the last seven years did Ohio have an RB top 200 rushing attempts in a season. The Bobcats have depth in the backfield with Julian Ross and O'Shaan Allison who rushed for 800 yards back in 2019. Tuggle won't be utilized as a pass-catcher, and his inflated production last year came against MAC bottom dwellers. Not targeting anyone from this Ohio passing game that averaged just 18 attempts per in 2020, but someone has to catch passes right? Shane Hooks has since transferred leaving **Isiah Cox** as the likely WR1 with 57 career receptions. With every projected starter at receiver under 6-feet tall, perhaps there is room for incoming FR **Aramoni Rhone** to have an impact in Year 1 as he stands 6-foot-5 with an impressive offer sheet featuring Arizona State, Cincinnati and Coastal Carolina.

BUFFALO BULLS

Top Play: RB Kevin Marks

Potential Bust: RB Kevin Marks

Sleeper: RB Ron Cook Jr.

Impact Transfer: n/a

Dynasty Prospect: RB Ron Cook Jr.

Fantastic Freshman: RB Aljay Henderson



Slight downgrade for **Kevin Marks** with the coaching changes, but this will still remain a run-heavy approach under offensive coordinator Shane Montgomery where his RB1 has averaged 210 carries over the last seven seasons. Some turnover on the offensive line doesn't help either, but the two returning starters were all-conference performers a year ago, and Lance Leipold stocked the position well in recruiting. RB2s under Montgomery have also seen success over the years, averaging 133 attempts, 700 yards and five touchdowns so we might see multiple backs with fantasy relevance like we've encountered with Buffalo of late. **Ron Cook Jr.** appears to have the inside track as of now, but Dylan McDuffie and possibly true FR **Aljay Henderson** will figure into the mix. Henderson's offer sheet only included MAC schools, but have to trust the eye of Lance Leipold here who found diamonds in the rough with Marks and Jaret Patterson.

KENT STATE GOLDEN FLASHES



Top Play: QB Dustin Crum

Potential Bust: RB Marquez Cooper

Sleeper: WR Keshunn Abram

Impact Transfer: WR Nykeim Johnson

Dynasty Prospect: QB Collin Schlee

Fantastic Freshman: WR Marcus Harris

Tough to poke holes in **Dustin Crum's** resume, particularly after last season where he saw dramatic improvements in completion percentage and his YPA average. Must be noted this came against MAC opponents and will face a pair of elite defenses during the non-conference portion of the schedule with the opener against Texas A&M and Iowa. Should be easy to maneuver around that by pairing him with other QBs on your CFF roster with a soft early slate of games where you may have to sit Crum – Phil Jurkovec or Malik Cunningham come to mind. The other dynamic Crum faces this year is not having his all-conference WR in Isaiah McKoy who is off to the NFL. Ja'Shaun Poke is excellent in the slot, but not sure how sustainable his 15.5 YPC average is in the middle. **Nykeim Johnson**, a Syracuse transfer, will add more speed to that WR room, and senior **Keshunn Abram** had a standout spring and should garner one of the starting spots outside. RB **Marquez Cooper** was featured in the Athletic's recent article as one of the Top 35 breakout performers for this upcoming season, noted as one of the strongest players on the team despite his size at 5-foot-6, 185 pounds. I question how much value he will have statistically, though, with Kent State's loaded backfield and Crum also vulturing red-zone opportunities. Head coach Sean Lewis is one of the fastest risers in the coaching profession and not sure how long he will remain at Kent State, but if he's around in 2022, backup **Collin Schlee** looks primed to take over the QB1 job after Crum departs. Would be a savvy dynasty stash.

MIAMI REDHAWKS



Top Play: WR Jack Sorenson

Potential Bust: RB Jaylon Bester

Sleeper: RB Tyre Shelton

Impact Transfer: n/a

Dynasty Prospect: RB Tyre Shelton

Fantastic Freshman: WR Jace Williams

18 catches for 354 yards last season for WR1 **Jack Sorenson**, including four TDs in the finale vs. Akron. Last six games played, Sorenson has four 100-yard performances with 40 catches. Extrapolated over a 12-game span, that would equate to 80-1,320-12 for someone being mostly ignored in redrafts. The issue – this offensive system has never fostered a receiver that's hit 60 receptions in a season with the best performance coming back in 2017 with James Gardner who posted 47-927-11. A solid late-round selection but expectations should be tempered for an offense that strives for balance. **Jaylon Bester** rushed for 741 yards and 14 touchdowns in 2019 but injuries kept him from playing last season. Regression is expected as Miami (OH) boasts impressive depth at the RB position, returning everyone of importance from last season, and regaining the services of top backup **Tyre Shelton** who also missed time last year with a back injury. 134 rushing attempts on average for the RB1 between 2014 and 2019 in this system.