

# NAMES TO KNOW-MWC

## Boise State

**Top Play:** WR Khalil Shakir

**Potential Bust:** QB Hank Bachmeier

**Sleeper:** TE Riley Smith

**Impact Transfer:** RB Cyrus Habibi-Likio

**Dynasty Prospect:** WR Stefan Cobbs

**Fantastic Freshman:** QB Taylen Green



The Broncos have multiple roster-worthy players for CFF but none more so than **Khalil Shakir** who should be a consensus Top 5 wideout this season. Not only for his individual talents – 52 receptions, six touchdowns and whopping 37 percent of Boise State’s target share last year – but Shakir should benefit from a coaching change under new OC Tim Plough who oversaw back-to-back 100+ catch seasons from Keelan Doss during his time at UC-Davis. 70 receptions is the absolute floor for Shakir in 2020 barring health. Tough to say someone is a potential bust that is going largely undrafted in CFF Drafts to this point, but **Hank Bachmeier** is being prompted as the QB1 for the Broncos a tad prematurely with former USC transfer Jack Sears hot on his tail following spring practices. This is a situation to monitor in the fall. **Riley Smith** steps into the vacant TE1 role that has averaged 29-382-6 over the last six seasons under Plough as OC. Starting RB George Holani appears to be tailor-made for this new offensive system, but can’t overlook the addition of former Oregon transfer **Cyrus Habibi-Likio** who’s made a career of vulturing touchdowns as a red-zone option during his time with the Ducks. Limited dynasty priorities from my vantage point right now with BSU, but might stash away primary backup **Stefan Cobbs** who received praise from the coaching staff the last two spring camps, and could wind up starting in 2022 with Shakir, CT Thomas and Octavius Evans all being seniors. **Taylen Green**, a 3-star dual-threat who is listed at 6-foot-6, 213 pounds on the team website, might be the QB of the future, but might have to wait multiple years before he takes the reins. Late, late dynasty stash.

## Utah State

**Top Play:** WR Deven Thompkins

**Potential Bust:** QB Logan Bonner **Sleeper:** RB John Gentry

**Impact Transfer:** QB Logan Bonner

**Dynasty Prospect:** WR Jamie Nance

**Fantastic Freshman:** QB Parker Buchanan



Kirk Merritt, Omar Bayless, Jonathan Adams...**Deven Thompkins**? WRs are by far the position to target for CFF purposes under head coach Blake Anderson, and Thompkins is the clear WR1 for Utah State entering next season. Doesn’t fit the size profile of a prototypical alpha at just 5-foot-7, 160 pounds, but was second on the team last season in targets with 30 in just four games, and seemed to take well to the new offense with 100 yards receiving in the spring game. **Logan Bonner** followed Anderson to Utah State but sat out the spring as he recovered from an injury suffered last season. Bonner doesn’t need any acclimation time to the playbook, but his absence from spring ball led to last year’s starter Andrew Peasley seeing increased reps. A mobile option, Peasley threw for 200+ yards and a pair of scores in the spring game, and will give Bonner a run for his starting gig. Rarely, if ever, would I suggest in investing draft capital in a running back in Blake Anderson’s offense due to the lack of volume – averaging just 160 carries per season. That said, I’m curious to see if **John Gentry** can have a breakout second year as he came out of spring ball as the RB1, and had an impressive offer sheet coming out of high school with P5 interest from Arkansas, Oklahoma State and Tennessee. Anderson added former Nebraska transfer and 3-star recruit **Jamie Nance** earlier in the offseason, and with the primary contributors at WR being upperclassmen, Nance would be a sneaky stash you could nab off waivers in dynasty formats. Utah State signed just one skill position player in their recruiting class – **QB Parker Buchanan** – so he is our choice there by default.

## Colorado State

**Top Play:** WR Dante Wright

**Potential Bust:** TE Trey McBride

**Sleeper:** n/a

**Impact Transfer:** RB David Bailey

**Dynasty Prospect:** RB David Bailey

**Fantastic Freshman:** QB Luke McAllister



You could potentially flip-flop both **Dante Wright** and **Trey McBride** as the Top Play or Potential Bust – it’s not as though we have a ton of options to choose from at Colorado State. The two pass-catchers dominated the market share for the Rams, accounting for 63 of the 101 targets last season. Colorado State didn’t do much to upgrade the depth at either position so CSU will largely bring back the same group as last season, but you have to figure that target distribution will be more spread out in 2021. We list McBride as the potential bust here just because of his higher ADP at his specific position. The big news this past week was the addition of former Boston College RB **David Bailey** to a room that was sorely lacking a true workhorse. As we saw with AJ Dillon, head coach Steve Addazio will run his RB1 into the ground if need be, and trust us, he does if the plan is to roll out Todd Centeio as his starting QB. Colorado State brings back all five starters along the offensive line, but proceed with caution as that was one of the worst groups in the country last season. Is bringing back everyone really a good thing? Colorado State brought in three QBs in this past recruiting class – **Luke McAllister** being the highest rated of the trio – and each will get their shot at unseating Centeio.

## Air Force

**Top Play:** RB Brad Roberts

**Potential Bust:** n/a

**Sleeper:** FB Omar Fattah

**Impact Transfer:** n/a

**Dynasty Prospect:** FB Elijah Robinson

**Fantastic Freshman:** RB Marceese Yetts



Not sure the move is official, but all indications appear to be that **Brad Roberts** will move over from fullback to running back this season, much of which to do with the lack of depth as Air Force loses both Kadin Remsberg and Joshua Stoner who have since graduated. Regardless of what position Roberts plays, it is a near guarantee that he will lead the team in carries and be the most valuable piece from Air Force on a CFF roster. There is no need to choose a “bust” for Air Force as no other player is getting drafted currently. With Roberts moving over to running back, the starting job at fullback is up for grabs with **Elijah Robinson** and **Omar Fattah** being the primary contenders. Production has been inconsistent at that spot over time, but there is proven evidence of the FB1 reaching 180 carries with both Taven Birdow and Cole Fagan reaching that number in the last three seasons. Would prefer Robinson in dynasty as he is just a sophomore with Fattah being in his final year.

## Wyoming

**Top Play:** RB Xazavian Valladay

**Potential Bust:** QB Sean Chambers

**Sleeper:** WR Ayden Eberhardt

**Impact Transfer:** n/a

**Dynasty Prospect:** RB Titus Swen

**Fantastic Freshman:** RB Jordan Vaughn



Lots to like with **Xazavian Valladay** entering 2021. All five starters back along an offensive line that was third-best in the Mountain West and ranked in the top half of the country in rushing grades (PFF) and Line Yards. Increased usage in the passing game LY with 19 targets in five games, topping his receiving production from the prior season. Offensive coordinator change for Wyoming, bringing in former Iowa offensive line coach Tim Polasek who will be tasked with balancing out the offense as the Cowboys have been severely one-dimensional in recent years. Polasek also spent time as the play-caller at North Dakota State where his RB1 topped double-digit rushing touchdowns between 2014-16. We have evidence of both a feature back being utilized ala 2014 where John Crockett “pounded the tater” 368 times, but also proof of a shared backfield in 2016 where multiple running backs had 160+ carries. I lean towards Valladay being in a featured role but cannot discount the depth Wyoming has with backups Trey Smith and **Titus Swen** – the latter of which received praise this spring from fellow players and staff, and could potentially be in line to start in 2022 if Valladay were to leave early for the NFL. Look to add Swen late in dynasty drafts to potentially reap the benefits a year from now. **Sean Chambers** is back in the saddle as the Cowboys’ QB1, but health is always a concern with his reckless running style and HC Craig Bohl has shown he’s willing to use multiple QBs at times.

## New Mexico

**Top Play:** QB Terry Wilson

**Potential Bust:** n/a

**Sleeper:** RB Bobby Cole

**Impact Transfer:** QB Terry Wilson

**Dynasty Prospect:** RB Aaron Dumas

**Fantastic Freshman:** RB Aaron Dumas



Never been a **Terry Wilson** guy per se, but I am very intrigued by this fit in Drew Mehringer’s offense which has been at its best with a dual-threat under center. And we saw the New Mexico QB1 put up relevant numbers at times last season with Tevaka Tuioti tallying 37.7 and 26.7 fantasy points respectively in the first two games, and then a walk-on in Isaiah Chavez top 31 points in the finale vs. Fresno State. Wilson should thrive in this move from the SEC to Mountain West, and will easily top 130+ carries this season if prior history is any indication with Mehringer as a play-caller. **Bobby Cole** capped last year on a high note with b2b 100-yard performances, and did nothing to lose his lead this spring as the RB1, leading to the eventual transfer of once highly-touted prospect Nathaniel Jones. I have yet to see Cole drafted once in a redraft mock this season, and while I wouldn’t advocate selecting him until the very last round, he could present some value in a featured role. Trouble is, Mehringer’s RB1 is hardly ever garnering 200+ carries as it tends to be a shared backfield amongst multiple running backs and the aforementioned QB. With Jones now out of the picture, the RB2 job is up for grabs and positive reports came out in the spring regarding FR **Aaron Dumas** who recorded 36 rushing touchdowns in his senior year of high school. Dumas did have a P5 offer from Arizona State and some notable G5 schools like San Diego State, Fresno State and SMU. Going to avoid listing any starters here as a potential bust as draft capital isn’t being spent on any New Mexico players thus far in the offseason.

## Fresno State

**Top Play:** RB Ronnie Rivers

**Potential Bust:** WR Jalen Cropper

**Sleeper:** TE1

**Impact Transfer:** WR Ty Jones

**Dynasty Prospect:** RB Jordan Wilmore

**Fantastic Freshman:** QB Jaylen Henderson



**Ronnie Rivers** remains a Top 10 back for the moment for me, but I voiced my concerns on the [Bestball Wrap-Up show](#) earlier this week as he is being continuously drafted within the Top 2 rounds in CFF Drafts currently. Two bye weeks, increased depth in the Fresno State backfield with the **Jordan Wilmore** addition, and a head coach that rarely has a running back top 200+ carries in a season. Rivers more than makes up for that lack of rushing volume with his receiving prowess, but I'd personally rather nab him in Rounds 3-4 if possible. As for Wilmore, the Utah transfer, with Rivers and possibly Jordan Mims out of the picture following this year, he should slide right in to the RB1 job in 2022 so I would be securing him now in your dynasty leagues. **Jalen Cropper** is an easy candidate as a potential bust, and I feel like I deserve partial blame for that with his Top 10 ranking in my February batch. Clear WR1 for Fresno State, but just too much increased depth at the position for me to think his 2020 is replicable. **Ty Jones** added from Washington, along with both Zane Pope and Emoryie Edwards returning from injury. Between 8-9 receivers could potentially see playing time this year. While Cropper's final three games last year (29 catches, 4 TDs) left a lasting impression, we shouldn't forget the minimal impact he had in Fresno's first three weeks (six catches, one TD). I didn't list a name as a sleeper but an entire position as no offensive system is more TE-friendly in all of college football than the one Kalen DeBoer employs. 39 receptions and 3 TDs on average from the TE1 between 2014-19. Just need to figure out who that name is. **Juan Rodriguez** probably gets the nod if returns to full health from last year. 3-star prospect **Jaylen Henderson** likely takes over the QB1 job following Jake Haener's departure in the next year or two.

## San Diego State

**Top Play:** RB Greg Bell

**Potential Bust:** TE Daniel Bellinger

**Sleeper:** WR Jesse Matthews

**Impact Transfer:** QB Jalen Mayden

**Dynasty Prospect:** RB Jaylon Armstead

**Fantastic Freshman:** RB Cam Davis



New coaching staff, same San Diego State mentality on offense as the Aztecs ran the ball 62 percent of the time in 2021. **Greg Bell** should once again be the focal point after rushing for 637 yards and six touchdowns last season, and is being urged by the coaching staff to become the "workhorse" according to offense coordinator Jeff Hecklinski. San Diego State doesn't lack for depth in the backfield with everyone returning, along with four starters on the offensive line, but Bell should pace the group as he did for much of 2020 before he was injured. Nobody outside of Bell is being drafted from SDSU so hard to call anyone a bust, but will give TE **Daniel Bellinger** that distinction as we thought pretty highly of him coming into last year given his athletic profile as a 3-sport high school athlete. Did finish second on the team with 21 receptions on 33 targets, but never found the end-zone. A potential Top 30 option at the TE position, but his production will be tied to how the new starting QB fares. Speaking of, the Aztecs added former Mississippi State transfer **Jalen Mayden** to compete with Lucas Johnson for the QB1 job, and while the latter finished ahead coming out of camp, it was a tightly-contested race in which Mayden made strides every day since arriving on campus. Gut says he eventually takes that job, though San Diego State's QB1 is irrelevant for fantasy purposes. **Jesse Matthews** took over the WR1 job, leading the way with 25 receptions on 43 targets. A late-round dart throw in the deepest of leagues perhaps. For dynasty, we should be looking to target shares of both **Jaylon Armstead** and true freshman **Cam Davis** – the former received quite a bit of praise this spring. Bell, Chance Bell, Jordan Byrd and Kaegun Williams all being seniors means this job is up for grabs come 2022.

## Nevada

**Top Play:** QB Carson Strong

**Potential Bust:** WR Romeo Doubs

**Sleeper:** WR Elijah Cooks

**Impact Transfer:** WR Marquis Spiker

**Dynasty Prospect:** WR Tory Horton

**Fantastic Freshman:** QB Clay Millen



Plethora of options to choose from as the Top Play for Nevada, but we roll with the conductor of this offense in QB **Carson Strong** who completed 70 percent of his throws last season for 27 touchdowns in nine games. Just once, against San Jose State, did Strong fail to throw multiple touchdowns in a game, and won't face a single Top 25 projected defense at any point in 2021. With all 11 starters returning on offense, and the soft schedule that we just mentioned, Strong should replicate last year's numbers at the very least. **Romeo Doubs** is the choice here as the potential bust, but you could suggest **Cole Turner** as well given the draft capital needed to select either player. The reason? Elijah Cooks is back, along with the transfer addition of **Marquis Spiker**, AND the returning depth with **Tory Horton**, Melquan Stovall and Justin Lockhart. There is only one football to go around here, and don't forget it was Cooks who was the far-and-away leader with 119 targets back in 2019. Nabbing Cooks as a late-round draft pick or off waivers might be a more beneficial strategy than spending early draft capital on Doubs. Our last three names above – **Clay Millen**, Horton and Spiker – I am aiming for in each one of my dynasty leagues with Strong, Doubs and Cooks likely in the NFL next season. Millen, rated the No. 36 QB nationally in this past year's recruiting class, had offers from Oregon, Indiana, Arizona and Oregon State, and should be the odds-on favorite to succeed Strong as QB1 in 2022 with a potentially elite pair of MWC pass-catchers at his disposal.

## San Jose State

**Top Play:** WR Isaiah Hamilton

**Potential Bust:** WR Isaiah Hamilton

**Sleeper:** WR Jermaine Braddock

**Impact Transfer:** WR Donald McKinney

**Dynasty Prospect:** QB Walker Eget

**Fantastic Freshman:** TE Nathan Lewis



**Isaiah Hamilton** enters 2021 as the projected WR1 for San Jose State with Tre Walker and Bailey Gaither off to the NFL, but I have my concerns. After breaking out as the third option in 2019 with 43 receptions and four TDs, why the significant drop-off last year where Hamilton had just 13 catches in eight games? I still prefer taking a chance on Hamilton as the top play for San Jose State over QB Nick Starkel who was far too inconsistent last year, adds zero rushing upside and now loses his two top playmakers. Starkel had two monster performances against New Mexico and Air Force, but failed to accumulate 20+ fantasy points half of the games he played last season. Someone else outside of Hamilton will be fantasy-relevant as a pass-catcher, and smart money for me is on 6-foot-1 **Jermaine Braddock** who closed the year with 4-39-1 on seven targets in the bowl game vs. Ball State. WR3 job looks to be undecided as of now between JUCO transfer **Donald McKinney** or sophomore Malikhi Miller. WR2 in Kevin McGiven's offenses have averaged right around 43 receptions and four TDs per season so whomever emerges could be deserving of some roster exposure. QB **Walker Eget** and TE **Nathan Lewis** were SJSU's two highest-rated incoming recruits this past offseason and are at positions of need for 2022 with Starkel and Derrick Deese in their final seasons.

## Hawaii

**Top Play:** RB Calvin Turner

**Potential Bust:** n/a

**Sleeper:** WR Jared Smart

**Impact Transfer:** n/a

**Dynasty Prospect:** RB Dae Dae Hunter

**Fantastic Freshman:** QB Brayden Schager



**Calvin Turner** is the best player on Hawaii's roster and needs no introduction. Had the fourth-most targets of any running back in the country (44) and was second to only CJ Marable among RBs in receiving touchdowns (6). Hawaii's offensive line graded out poorly according to PFF but was 40<sup>th</sup> in Line Yards and returns 4-of-5 starters, hopefully resulting in better rushing numbers from the entire offense. Don't expect 200+ carries here, though, for Turner as this will continue to be a shared backfield with **Dae Dae Hunter** and QB **Chevan Cordeiro**. Don't really view any Hawaii players as potential busts as Turner's PPR value and Cordeiro's rushing ability present a foolproof floor for both players. WR1 **Jared Smart** is going largely undrafted in standard formats, and is the only reliable option Hawaii has at the position. We didn't get any answers this spring as to who his counterparts will be. Smart regressed in every statistical category last season, and averaged just 8.89 YPC, but this is someone with a 1,000-yard season on his resume. Worth a "risk" in the final rounds of drafts, and easily cuttable if doesn't pan out.

## UNLV

**Top Play:** RB Charles Williams

**Potential Bust:** RB Charles Williams

**Sleeper:** WR Kyle Williams

**Impact Transfer:** RB Jayvaun Wilson

**Dynasty Prospect:** RB Jayvaun Wilson

**Fantastic Freshman:** QB Cameron Friel



The volume was there for **Charles Williams** last year, who averaged just above 19 carries per contest, but the offensive line failed him as he saw his YPC averages drop to just 4.27. Three starters are back from that group, and four of the projected starters are 290+ plus which was an offseason goal of this coaching staff to get "beefier" upfront. If UNLV continues to field the worst run blocking group in the conference (according to PFF), it could be tough sledding once again for Williams who will fail to outperform his current ADP (RB46). I think all three QBs in the mix to start for UNLV – Doug Brumfield, **Cameron Friel**, Justin Rogers – were all leading the competition at one point in time this spring, but it was Brumfield who exited camp as the guy. Not selecting a UNLV QB this season in any redraft format, but Friel has my attention for dynasty formats. A 3-star out of Hawaii, Friel has excellent size at 6-foot-4 with a strong arm from what I could see from the grainy film on him and had offers from half of the teams in the Pac-12. That has my attention. **Kyle Williams** dominated the target share as a freshman with 35 receptions on 52 targets, and is currently WR128 in Fantrax's ADP. Dirt cheap option in any format. Even minimal improvement out of the quarterback position could result in a breakout year. Love snatching up Oregon transfer **Jayvaun Wilson** late in dynasty drafts as the successor to Williams at RB in 2022. He's built to handle the 20 carries per game at 6-foot-2, 210 pounds.