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(Neb.)-Gilkey drafted by Cleveland



By: Andrew Lacy Posted at: 04/27/2013 05:01 PM

The wait is over for Garrett Gilkey. The former Chadron State College offensive lineman was drafted by the Cleveland Browns with the 227th pick of the 2013 NFL Draft Saturday in New York City.

"I really am at a loss for words because it's a dream come true," Gilkey said. "I'm excited to see what opportunities God has planned for me in Cleveland."

Gilkey, a two-time Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference All-Conference performer and an All-American in 2012, becomes the third Chadron State College football player to be drafted.

"I'm so grateful to be from Chadron State and I'll always be an Eagle," Gilkey said. "All the support I've received has made this process easy. I embrace being from Chadron and I can't wait to come back."

Gilkey's collegiate coach, Jay Long, shared those sentiments.

"Today is a great day for Chadron State and for Garrett," Long said. "We're so proud of him and all his hard work paid off. We are all extremely excited for him to be a member of the Cleveland Browns."

Gilkey, a 6-foot-6, 318-pound native of Sandwich, Ill., was a three-year starter for the Eagles and he also played a season of college basketball. He is the first Chadron State College athlete to be drafted in the NFL since Don Beebe, who was his high school football coach.

"Garrett's rise to the NFL is a perfect example of a student-athlete who worked hard with what had he available to him," Long said. "It goes to show that Chadron State College can consistently produce high-quality athletes. This confirms our strong tradition and for us to have two players in the NFL solidifies our program."

Joining Gilkey in the NFL is former RMAC rival Ryan Jensen of Colorado State University-Pueblo. Jensen and Gilkey are the first two RMAC players to be selected in the same draft since 1984.