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Illinois State • Indiana State • Missouri State • North Dakota • North Dakota State • UNI  
South Dakota • South Dakota State • Southern Illinois • Western Illinois • Youngstown State

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## Missouri Valley Football Announces 2020-21 All-Conference Squad

For the second-straight season, a league freshman has been named the Missouri Valley Football Conference's top offensive player as QB Mark Gronowski of South Dakota State has been named the 2020-21 MVFC Offensive Player of the Year. Gronowski also earned the league's Freshman and Newcomer of the Year honors. Jared Brinkman of UNI has been named MVFC Defensive Player of the Year, and coach Bobby Petrino of Missouri State has been tabbed MVFC Coach of the Year.

Gronowski, a Jerry Rice Award finalist, follows NDSU's Trey Lance (2019) as the only league freshmen to earn the MVFC's top offensive honor, and he's the fifth freshman to win both the league's Freshman and Newcomer of the Year honors. Previous first-year players to sweep those two awards include QB Sawyer Kollmorgen (UNI) in 2012, RB Martin Ruiz (YSU) in 2013, LB Jabril Cox (NDSU) in 2017, and QB Trey Lance (NDSU) in 2019. The freshman from Naperville (Ill.) Neuqua Valley High accounted for 1,434 yards of total offense (239 ypg) and completed 76-of-133 passes (57.1 percent) for 1,051 yards (175.2 ypg) with eight touchdowns and three interceptions in leading SDSU to a share of the MVFC crown (with Missouri State and North Dakota) and No. 1 overall seed in this year's NCAA Division I Football Championship.

A Buck Buchanan finalist, Brinkman was a force inside, facing double and triple teams on most plays. Despite that, he led the MVFC with 9.0 tackles for loss and 1.29 TFLs per game. He finished the season with 38 total tackles. The senior was second in the league with two forced fumbles and tallied three QB hurries and recovered a fumble. He had 4.5 TFLs and a sack against Missouri State and was a leader on the Panther defense that led the league in scoring defense, allowing just 12 touchdowns all season. It marks the 13th time a UNI player has earned the league's top defensive honor.

For the first time in 30 seasons, Missouri State will be playing the NCAA FCS playoffs. MSU enters the NCAA playoffs with four-straight wins (three over ranked opponents), dating back to its win at No. 21 South Dakota on March 13, and the Bears earned a share of the MVFC regular-season title for the first time since 1990. Petrino was announced as a finalist for the Eddie Robinson Award, presented to the FCS National Coach of the Year. Petrino is in his first season as head coach of the Bears, and he inherited a team that was 1-10 last season and was picked 9th in the MVFC preseason poll. Petrino is the first MSU coach to be tabbed league Coach of the Year since Jesse Branch won back-to-back awards in 1989 and 1990.

### 2020-21 all-Missouri Valley Football Conference Team

**OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** QB Mark Gronowski, South Dakota State

**DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR:** DL Jared Brinkman, UNI

**NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR:** QB Mark Gronowski, South Dakota State *(full all-Newcomer Team announced on Friday, April 23)*

**FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR:** QB Mark Gronowski, South Dakota State *(full all-Newcomer Team announced on Friday, April 23)*

**'BRUCE CRADDOCK' VALLEY FOOTBALL COACH OF THE YEAR:** Bobby Petrino, Missouri State

#### FIRST TEAM - OFFENSE

QB --	Mark Gronowski, South Dakota State	6-3	200	Fr.	Naperville (Ill.) Neuqua Valley High
RB --	Pierre Strong Jr., South Dakota State	5-11	210	Jr.	Little Rock (Ark.) McClellan High
	Otis Weah, North Dakota	5-9	185	So.	Moorhead (Minn.) Moorhead High
FB --	Hunter Luepke, North Dakota State	6-1	245	So.	Spencer (Wis.) Spencer High
WR--	Avante Cox, Southern Illinois	5-10	170	Jr.	Rochester (Ill.) Rochester High / Wyoming
	Dennis Houston, Western Illinois	6-2	205	Sr.	San Antonio (Texas) Earl Warren / Fullerton
	Christian Watson, North Dakota State	6-4	200	Jr.	Tampa (Fla.) Plant High
TE --	Zach Heins, South Dakota State	6-7	260	So.	Sioux Falls (S.D.) Washington High
OL --	Zeveyon Furcron, Southern Illinois	6-2	327	Sr.	Crest Hill (Ill.) Joliet Catholic
	Garret Greenfield, South Dakota State	6-6	295	So.	Rock Valley (Iowa) Rock Valley High
	Drew Himmelman, Illinois State	6-10	325	Sr.	Geneseo (Ill.) Geneseo High
	Nathan Nguon, North Dakota	6-3	295	Sr.	Burnsville (Minn.) Eagan High
	Cordell Volson, North Dakota State	6-7	310	Sr.	Balfour (N.D.) Drake High
PK --	Matthew Cook, Northern Iowa	5-11	180	So.	Cedar Falls (Iowa) Cedar Falls High
LS --	Ross Kennelly, North Dakota State	5-11	213	Sr.	Superior (Wis.) Superior High

## FIRST TEAM - DEFENSE

DL --	Jared Brinkman, Northern Iowa	6-2	290	Sr.	Iowa City (Iowa) Regina High
	John Ridgeway, Illinois State	6-6	325	Jr.	Bloomington (Ill.) Bloomington High
	Caleb Sanders, South Dakota State	6-1	280	Jr.	Glenwood (Iowa) Glenwood High
	Spencer Waege, North Dakota State	6-5	274	Jr.	South Shore (S.D.) Watertown High
LB --	Logan Backhaus, South Dakota State	6-4	205	Sr.	Spirit Lake (Iowa) Spirit Lake High
	Spencer Cuvelier, Northern Iowa	6-3	245	Jr.	Cresco (Iowa) Crestwood High/Iowa Central CC
	Grant Dixon, Youngstown State	6-3	225	Sr.	Succasunna (N.J.) Roxbury / Marist
	James Kaczor, North Dakota State	6-0	211	Jr.	St. Cloud (Minn.) St. Cloud Tech High
DB--	Montrae Braswell, Missouri State	6-0	185	So.	Avon Park (Fla.) Avon Park High / Central Michigan
	Qua Brown, Southern Illinois	5-11	206	Sr.	DeLand (Fla.) University High
	James Ceasar, Southern Illinois	5-10	185	Sr.	Detroit (Mich.) East English Village
	Don Gardner, South Dakota State	6-1	185	Sr.	Chicago (Ill.) Wendell Phillips High
	Josh Hayes, North Dakota State	5-11	185	Sr.	Lakeland (Fla.) Lake Gibson High
P --	Garret Wegner, North Dakota State	6-0	197	Sr.	Lodi (Wis.) Lodi High
RS --	Tony Tate, Western Illinois	5-9	180	Sr.	DeKalb (Ill.) DeKalb / Walsh

## SECOND TEAM - OFFENSE

QB --	Connor Sampson, Western Illinois	6-3	215	Sr.	Belleville (Mich.) Belleville High
	Tommy Schuster, North Dakota	6-0	195	Fr.	Macomb (Mich.) Chippewa Valley
RB --	Jaleel McLaughlin, Youngstown State	5-9	175	Jr.	Marshville (N.C.) Forest Hills / Notre Dame College
	Javon Williams Jr., Southern Illinois	6-2	245	So.	Centralia (Ill.) Centralia High
FB --	Jacob Garrett, Southern Illinois	6-2	245	Jr.	Sellersburg (Ind.) Silver Creek High
WR --	Jaxon Janke, South Dakota State	6-2	210	So.	Madison (S.D.) Madison High
	Tony Tate, Western Illinois	5-9	180	Sr.	DeKalb (Ill.) DeKalb / Walsh
	Caleb Vander Esch, South Dakota	6-1	205	Sr.	San Jose (Calif.) Willow Glen High
TE --	Noah Gindorff, North Dakota State	6-6	266	Jr.	Crosby (Minn.) Crosby-Ironton High
OL --	Landon Bebee, Missouri State	6-3	291	So.	Webb City (Mo.) Webb City High
	Dan Becker, Youngstown State	6-5	295	Jr.	Cincinnati (Ohio) Indian Hill
	Cody Mauch, North Dakota State	6-5	295	Jr.	Hankinson (N.D.) Hankinson High
	Mason McCormick, South Dakota State	6-4	300	So.	Sioux Falls (S.D.) Roosevelt High
	Matt Waletzko, North Dakota	6-7	295	Jr.	Cold Spring (Minn.) Rocori High
PK --	Jose Pizano, Missouri State	5-7	221	So.	Lehi (Utah) Lehigh High / Snow College (Utah)
LS --	Dalton Godfrey, South Dakota	6-2	230	Jr.	Cedar Falls (Iowa) Cedar Falls High

## SECOND TEAM - DEFENSE

DL --	Jordan Berner, Southern Illinois	6-5	255	Sr.	Chester (Ill.) Chester High
	Kevin Ellis, Missouri State	6-4	241	Jr.	Fort Worth (Texas) North Crowley High
	Eric Johnson, Missouri State	6-5	286	Sr.	Plainfield (Ill.) Plainfield South High
	Brantae Wells, Northern Iowa	6-3	260	Sr.	Des Moines (Iowa) Dowling Catholic High
LB --	Devon Krzanowski, North Dakota	6-2	235	Jr.	Fond du Lac (Wis.) St. Cloud State
	Brock Mogensen, South Dakota	6-2	225	So.	Farmington (Minn.) Farmington High
	Bryson Strong, Southern Illinois	5-10	230	Jr.	Fairview Heights (Ill.) Althoff Catholic High
	Tylar Wiltz, Missouri State	6-1	230	Jr.	Breaux Bridge (La.) Breaux Bridge / Independence CC
DB --	Austin Evans, Northern Iowa	6-1	190	Sr.	Kansas City (Mo.) Archbishop O'Hara High
	Evan Holm, North Dakota	5-11	180	Sr.	Edina (Minn.) Edina High
	Zaire Jones, Youngstown State	6-1	195	Sr.	Meridian (Miss.) Meridian High
	Kyriq McDonald, Missouri State	6-0	202	Jr.	Madison (Ala.) James Clemens High / Cincinnati
	Michael Tutsie, North Dakota State	5-11	192	Jr.	Indianapolis (Ind.) Warren Central High
P --	Brady Schutt, South Dakota	6-1	215	Sr.	Orange City (Iowa) MOC/FV High
RS --	Christian Watson, North Dakota State	6-4	200	Jr.	Tampa (Fla.) Plant High

## HONORABLE MENTION

**Illinois State:** FB Tim McCloy, LB Brandon Simon, LB Shanon Reid • **Missouri State:** P Grant Burkett, RB Celdon Manning, WR Damoriea Vick • **North Dakota:** RB/RS Luke Skokna, WR Garrett Maag, OL Ryan Tobin • **North Dakota State:** DL Eli Mostaert, DT Lane Tucker, TE Josh Babicz • **UNI:** DB Omar Brown, OL Trevor Penning, WR Quan Hampton • **South Dakota:** DB Myles Harden, LB Jack Cochrane, DL Jacob Matthew, TE Brett Samson • **South Dakota State:** OL Wes Genant, PK Cole Frahm, RB Isaiah Davis • **Southern Illinois:** LS Dan Heilbron, LB Bryce Notree, P Jack Colquhoun • **Western Illinois:** DB Michael Lawson, DL Eryk Preston, OL Will Waddell • **Youngstown State:** DB Keyon Martin, DL James Jackson, RS Jake Coates

**OFFENSIVE PLAYERS OF THE YEAR**

1985	Mike Smith, QB, Northern Iowa
1986	Sean Payton, QB, Eastern Illinois
1987	Carl Boyd, RB, Northern Iowa
1988	Paul Singer, QB, Western Illinois
1989	DeAndre Smith, QB, Missouri State
1990	DeAndre Smith, QB, Missouri State
1991	Derrick Franklin, RB, Indiana State
1992	Toby Davis, RB, Illinois State
1993	Kurt Warner, QB, Northern Iowa
1994	Rob St. Sauver, QB, Western Illinois
1995	Dedric Ward, WR, Northern Iowa
1996	Dedric Ward, WR, Northern Iowa
1997	Aaron Stecker, RB, Western Illinois
1998	Kariton Carpenter, RB, S. Illinois
1999	Cornell Craig, WR, S. Illinois
2000	Charles Tharp, RB, Western Illinois
2001	P.J. Mays, RB, Youngstown State
2002	Russ Michna, QB, Western Illinois
2003	Russ Michna, QB, Western Illinois
2004	Joel Sambursky, QB, S. Illinois
2005	Laurént Robinson, WR, Illinois State
2006	Marcus Mason, RB, Youngstown St.
2007	Eric Sanders, QB, Northern Iowa
2008	Herb Donaldson, RB, Western Illinois
2009	Deji Karim, RB, Southern Illinois
2010	Matt Barr, QB, Western Illinois
2011	Shakir Bell, RB, Indiana State
2012	Matt Brown, QB, Illinois State
2013	Brock Jensen, QB, North Dakota St.
2014	Marshaun Coprich, RB, Illinois State
2015	Marshaun Coprich, RB, Illinois State
2016	Taryn Christian, QB, S. Dakota St.
2017	Chris Streveler, QB, South Dakota
2018	Easton Stick, QB, North Dakota State
2019	Trey Lance, QB, North Dakota State
20-21	Mark Gronowski, QB, South Dakota State

**DEFENSIVE PLAYERS OF THE YEAR**

1985	James Houston, LB, Illinois State
	Mark Farley, LB, Northern Iowa
1986	Brian Gant, LB, Illinois State
1987	Matt Soraghan, LB, Missouri State
1988	John Jurkovic, DT, Eastern Illinois
1989	John Jurkovic, DT, Eastern Illinois
1990	Tim Lance, DB, Eastern Illinois
1991	William Freeney, LB, Northern Iowa
1992	William Freeney, LB, Northern Iowa
1993	Andre Allen, LB, Northern Iowa
1994	Andre Allen, LB, Northern Iowa
1995	Tim Carver, LB, Eastern Illinois
1996	Mike Miano, DL, Missouri State
1997	Harry Deligianis, DT, Youngstown State
1998	James Milton, LB, Western Illinois
1999	Edgerton Hartwell, LB, Western Illinois
2000	Edgerton Hartwell, LB, Western Illinois
2001	Adam Vogt, LB, Northern Iowa
2002	Boomer Grigsby, LB, Illinois State
2003	Boomer Grigsby, LB, Illinois State
2004	Boomer Grigsby, LB, Illinois State
2005	Brent Hawkins, DE, Illinois State
2006	Cameron Siskowic, LB, Illinois State
2007	Brannon Carter, LB, Northern Iowa
2008	James Ruffin, DE, Northern Iowa
2009	Danny Batten, DE, South Dakota State
	James Ruffin, DE, Northern Iowa
2010	Kyle Glazier, LB, Western Illinois
2011	L.J. Fort, LB, Northern Iowa
2012	Marcus Williams, DB, North Dakota State
2013	Tyler Starr, LB, South Dakota
2014	Kyle Emanuel, DE, North Dakota State
2015	Deiondre' Hall, DB, Northern Iowa
2016	Karter Schult, DE, Northern Iowa
2017	Brett Taylor, LB, Western Illinois
2018	Jabril Cox, LB, North Dakota State
2019	Derrek Tuszka, DE, North Dakota State
20-21	Jared Brinkman, DL, Northern Iowa

**'BRUCE CRADDOCK'  
COACHES OF THE YEAR**

1985	Darrell Mudra, Northern Iowa
1986	Al Molde, Eastern Illinois
1987	Darrell Mudra, Northern Iowa
	Bruce Craddock, Western Illinois
1988	Bruce Craddock, Western Illinois
1989	Jesse Branch, Missouri State
1990	Jesse Branch, Missouri State
1991	Terry Allen, Northern Iowa
1992	Terry Allen, Northern Iowa
1993	Terry Allen, Northern Iowa
1994	Terry Allen, Northern Iowa
1995	Bob Spoo, Eastern Illinois
1996	Terry Allen, Northern Iowa
1997	Randy Ball, Western Illinois
1998	Todd Berry, Illinois State
1999	Todd Berry, Illinois State
2000	Don Patterson, Western Illinois
2001	Mark Farley, Northern Iowa
2002	Don Patterson, Western Illinois
2003	Jerry Kill, Southern Illinois
2004	Jerry Kill, Southern Illinois
2005	Jon Heacock, Youngstown State
2006	Jon Heacock, Youngstown State
2007	Mark Farley, Northern Iowa
2008	Dale Lennon, Southern Illinois
2009	Dale Lennon, Southern Illinois
2010	Trent Miles, Indiana State
2011	Craig Bohl, North Dakota State
2012	Craig Bohl, North Dakota State
2013	Craig Bohl, North Dakota State
2014	Brock Spack, Illinois State
2015	Bob Nielson, Western Illinois
2016	John Stiegelmeier, S. Dakota State
2017	Chris Klieman, North Dakota State
2018	Curt Mallory, Indiana State
2019	Matt Entz, North Dakota State
20-21	Bobby Petrino, Missouri State

**VOTING TOTALS FOR 2020-21 SPECIALTY HONORS - ONLY TOP VOTE-GETTERS ARE LISTED****OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

Name	School	Points
Mark Gronowski	South Dakota State	38
Otis Weah	North Dakota	10

**DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

Name	School	Points
Jared Brinkman	Northern Iowa	77
Devon Krzanowski	North Dakota	41
John Ridgeway	Illinois State	26

**COACH OF THE YEAR**

Name	School	Points
Bobby Petrino	Missouri State	50
John Stiegelmeier	South Dakota State	46
Bubba Schweigert	North Dakota	28
Nick Hill	Southern Illinois	16

**NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR**

Name	School	Points
Mark Gronowski	South Dakota State	80
Tommy Schuster	North Dakota	25
Jaleel McLaughlin	Youngstown State	24

**FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR**

Name	School	Points
Mark Gronowski	South Dakota State	85
Tommy Schuster	North Dakota	36
Myles Harden	South Dakota	11