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SENIOR BOWL SETS RECORD WITH 15 FIRST-ROUND DRAFT PICKS

Contest once again establishes itself as the nation's ultimate talent showcase as 15 players who played in the 2006 contest were selected in the first-round of this year's NFL Draft.

MOBILE, Ala. (May 1) – The over 800 NFL coaches and scouts and thousands of fans who attended Senior Bowl Week 2006 in Mobile had the opportunity to see more future first-round NFL Draft picks than from any other Senior Bowl game ever played.

Bowl officials announced on Monday that a record 15 players who were selected in the first-round of this weekend's NFL Draft were members of the 2006 Senior Bowl North and South team rosters, breaking the 57-year-old event's previous one-year best of 14 first-rounders.

Heading the list of Senior Bowl first-round selections was Virginia's talented offensive tackle D'Brickashaw Ferguson, who turned in a dominating performance during Senior Bowl Week and was selected with the draft's fourth overall pick by the New York Jets.

Ferguson's selection also marked the sixth straight year that a Senior Bowl player has gone on to become a top-five overall pick in the draft, joining running back LaDainian Tomlinson (fifth) in 2001, quarterbacks David Carr (first) in 2002, Carson Palmer (first) in 2003 and Philip Rivers (fourth) in 2004, and running back Cadillac Williams, the fifth overall selection in 2005 who was named the NFL's Offensive Rookie of the Year this past season.

In addition to the record number of first-rounders, the impressive quality of players who participated in this year's game was further demonstrated by the fact

that 46 Senior Bowlers were selected on the draft's first day, with 15 Senior Bowl players chosen in round two and 16 more in round three.

The Senior Bowl's 15 first-round selections, made even more impressive when you consider that 12 underclassmen who were ineligible to play in the Senior Bowl were also chosen in round one, also included the first player selected overall or first senior chosen at eight different positions.

For example, the first offensive tackle, guard and center selected in the draft all played in the Senior Bowl. In addition to Ferguson, who was the first offensive tackle, Oklahoma's Davin Joseph was the first guard taken in the draft when he was chosen by Tampa Bay, and Ohio State's Nick Mangold, selected by the Jets, was the first center.

Florida State's Brodrick Bunkley, selected 14th overall by the Eagles, was the first defensive tackle chosen, while Clemson's Tye Hill became the first cornerback when he was chosen with the 15th overall selection by the St. Louis Rams.

Senior Bowl 2006 also featured the first two senior running backs chosen in the draft. Former Memphis All-American DeAngelo Williams was selected in round one by the Carolina Panthers, while the Indianapolis Colts made former LSU star Joseph Addai the 30th pick of the first round.

The first senior tight end chosen in the draft was also a Senior Bowler -- UCLA's Mercedes Lewis -- who went to the Jaguars, and the first three senior defensive ends taken in the draft also played in the Senior Bowl -- first-rounders Kamerion Wimbley of Florida State, Penn State's Tamba Hali and Mathias Kiwanuka of Boston College.

Other Senior Bowl 2006 stars chosen in round one include Vanderbilt quarterback Jay Cutler, who capitalized on an outstanding Senior Bowl Week to become the 11th player selected overall when he was chosen by the Denver Broncos; linebacker Chad Greenway of Iowa (Vikings) and Miami cornerback Kelly Jennings (Seahawks).

N.C. State defensive end/outside linebacker Manny Lawson also became a first-round pick, as he was chosen 22nd overall by the San Francisco 49ers whose head coach, Mike Nolan and his staff, coached Lawson and his South squad teammates throughout Senior Bowl Week 2006.

The week that Nolan and his staff spent in Mobile proved extremely valuable to the 49ers organization as four of their draftees played in the contest -- Lawson, linebacker Parys Haralson of Tennessee, N.C. State safety Marcus Hudson, and Penn State's quarterback turned running back Michael Robinson.

Thirty of the 32 NFL teams drafted at least one Senior Bowl player, with the Cleveland Browns leading all clubs with seven Senior Bowl selections, the St. Louis Rams drafted six and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers made five selections who played in Senior Bowl 2006.

The next showcase of future NFL stars is set for Saturday, January 27, 2007, when the 58th annual Senior Bowl will kickoff in Mobile's Ladd-Peebles Stadium. For more information, contact the Senior Bowl at 251-438-2276 or access the bowl's website at www.seniorbowl.com

The Senior Bowl's 15 First-Round Draft Picks

Player	Pos.	School	Pick	NFL Team
D'Brickshaw Ferguson	OT	Virginia	4	N.Y. Jets
Jay Cutler	QB	Vanderbilt	11	Denver
Kameron Wimbley	DE	Florida State	13	Cleveland
Brodrick Bunkley	DT	Florida State	14	Philadelphia
Tye Hill	CB	Clemson	15	St. Louis
Chad Greenway	LB	Iowa	17	Minnesota
Tamba Hali	DE	Penn State	20	Kansas City
Manny Lawson	LB	N.C. State	22	San Francisco
Davin Joseph	OG	Oklahoma	23	Tampa Bay
DeAngelo Williams	RB	Memphis	27	Carolina
Marcedes Lewis	TE	UCLA	28	Jacksonville
Nick Mangold	OC	Ohio State	29	N.Y. Jets
Joseph Addai	RB	LSU	30	Indianapolis
Kelly Jennings	CB	Miami	31	Seattle
Mathias Kiwanuka	DE	Boston College	32	N.Y. Giants