

## News-Press

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### Locals go back-to-back

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Henry joins Davis in Cleveland, Cards choose Gramatica

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Playing soccer outside his LaBelle home Sunday morning, Bill Gramatica finally went inside to watch the NFL Draft. Meanwhile, Anthony Henry was taking a shower at his apartment in Tampa.

The University of South Florida teammates then learned about their future in professional football.

The Cleveland Browns selected Henry, a 6-foot, 205-pound cornerback and Estero High School graduate, with the 97th overall pick and the second pick of the fourth round.

With the next pick, the Arizona Cardinals picked Gramatica, a 5-10 place-kicker and LaBelle High School graduate. But first, the New England Patriots opened the fourth round - and the second day of the Draft - by picking South Florida offensive lineman Kenyatta Jones, which set into motion a rarity: three consecutive draftees from the same school.

"I came out of the shower, and I saw Kenyatta got drafted," said Henry, who then picked up the phone to call Jones, only to hear a call-waiting beep.

A Cleveland Browns official awaited on the other line. The official told Henry that they had selected him.

"I forget his name because I was so excited," Henry said.

A few seconds later, Henry found himself talking to new Cleveland coach Butch Davis.

"So, do you mind coming up here to play in this cold weather?" Davis said.

"No, not at all," Henry replied. "It's going to be my job. This is a dream come true."

Almost immediately after Henry's dream came true, so did Gramatica's.

The Cardinals took Gramatica as their placekicker of the future with the 98th overall pick.

"Everybody wants to go as high as they can, but in the fourth round, I can't complain at all," said Gramatica, whose brother, Martin, is the placekicker for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. "I wasn't really nervous. I knew I would get picked sooner or later. Thank goodness Kenyatta was the first pick, then Anthony and me."

Jones, Henry and Gramatica were the first three players ever drafted from USF, which began its football program five years ago.

Fort Myers-based agent Kevin Jursinski will represent Gramatica, while Jerrold Colton, who is based in New Jersey, will represent Henry.

Gramatica made 29-of-30 extra-point attempts his senior season and 16-of-24 field goals, including a career-long 63-yarder.

"Yeah, I had some misses, but if you look at the distances, they were 45, 55 and 61 yards," Gramatica said. "Inside the 40, I was 9-of-10. Obviously, the Cardinals know that."

Gramatica said he thought that the New Orleans Saints were going to draft him late in the third round on Saturday.

"We would have been excited if New Orleans had taken him," Jursinski said. "He would have been the third- or fourth-highest kicker ever taken."

"But we are all pretty excited that Arizona took him and that three USF guys went in a row. Everybody was wearing USF shirts. Now, everybody is going to think that USF is a powerhouse."

Gramatica and Henry each said they plan on attending mini-camp in May.

Both players are stepping into good situations.

The Cardinals' incumbent place-kicker, Cary Blanchard, has not re-signed and is an unrestricted free agent. The Browns are a rebuilding team, and Davis has followed Henry since he played at Estero.

"He recruited me a little bit coming out of high school," Henry said of Davis, who coached last season at the University of Miami. "I know good things about him. He's a great coach. I'm going to continue to work hard."

Said Gramatica: "It's a whole different game now. I'll just try and stay relaxed."

- Sports editor Tom Hayden contributed to this report.

#### SCOUTING REPORT

Pro Football Weekly compiled scouting reports on almost every player drafted. Here's a look at the reports on Estero High School graduate Anthony Henry and LaBelle graduate Bill Gramatica, who were drafted in the fourth round on Sunday:

Anthony Henry

DRAFTED: By the Cleveland Browns, fourth round, 97th overall pick

POSITION: Cornerback

HEIGHT: 6-0

WEIGHT: 205

40-YARD TIME: 4.59

NOTES: Has been clocked in under 4.4 with a stiff wind behind him. Partial qualifier in 1996 who regained the year at the end of his career by graduating. Started at safety from '97 to '99, except for two games he missed and a third he was far from 100 percent in '99, when he badly sprained his knee. Moved to cornerback in 2000. Had 73 tackles, five passes broken up and two interceptions in '97 79 tackles and six passes broken up in '98 62 stops and three picks in '99 and 40 tackles, eight passes broken up and a career-high five interceptions in 2000.

Bill Gramatica

DRAFTED: By the Arizona Cardinals, fourth round, 98th overall.

POSITION: Kicker

HEIGHT: 5-10

WEIGHT: 180

40-YARD TIME: 4.68

NOTES: Brother of Tampa Bay Buccaneer kicker Martin Gramatica. Led the nation in touchback percentage in 2000. In 2000, he kicked the second-longest field goal since the NCAA abolished the kicking tee, booting a 63-yarder against Austin Peay. For the season, Gramatica was 16-of-24 on field-goal attempts 29-of-30 on extra points and launched 37-of-45 kickoffs (82.2-percent) into the end zone.

#### LOCAL CONNECTION

Since Deion Sanders paved the way for area high school football players in 1989, a number of local stars have been drafted by NFL teams. Here's a look at some of the standouts, the high school they attended and the team that drafted them:

JAMMI GERMAN: Fort Myers, Atlanta Falcons (1998 third round, 73rd overall)

BILL GRAMATICA: LaBelle, Arizona Cardinals (2001 fourth round, 98th overall)

MARTIN GRAMATICA: LaBelle, Tampa Bay Buccaneers (1999 third round, 80th overall)

ANTHONY HENRY: Estero, Cleveland Browns (2001 fourth round, 97th overall)

EDGERRIN JAMES: Immokalee, Indianapolis Colts (1999 first round, fourth overall)

JEVON KEARSE: North Fort Myers, Tennessee Titans (1999 first round, 16th overall)

DEION SANDERS: North Fort Myers, Atlanta Falcons (1989 first round, fifth overall)

GREG SPIRES: Mariner, New England Patriots (1998 third round, 83rd overall)

#### PHOTO CAPTION:

FOLLOW THE LEADER: University of South Florida teammates Anthony Henry, left, and Bill Gramatica were back-to-back selections in the fourth round of the NFL Draft on Sunday. Henry, who went to Estero High School, was the 97th overall pick, while Gramatica, a LaBelle graduate, was 98th. File photos