Lights add 10 recruits, including Havre's Strickland
George Ferguson, Havre Daily News sports editor
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An already outstanding recruiting class just got better for the Montana State University-Northern football team.

Earlier this week, Northern head coach Mark Samson announced the signing of 10 more new Lights, including a Havre High standout.

Heading the list of five in-state signees and five out-of-state players is Blue Pony senior Corderro Strickland. Strickland was a Central A All-Conference wide receiver and cornerback at HHS, and could play either position for the Lights. He has been at Havre High for three years and has participated in football, basketball and track and field for the Blue Ponies. Strickland (6-2, 175) will bring great speed and size to the Lights' program on either side of the ball.

"We were very excited to get a great hometown player in Corderro Strickland," Samson said. "He is a great athlete who will be a great addition to our team next fall. It's always great to keep our hometown talent here in Havre."

Northern also added a pair of speedster in brothers Josh and Trevor Baum of Lassen, Calif. Josh Baum (6-2, 200) is a safety who is transferring to Northern from the College of the Siskiyous Junior College where he was first-team all-conference. He'll have three years at Northern and should compete for a starting spot right away. His younger brother Trevor Baum (6-1, 190) is a punter and wide receiver, from Lassen High School. He earned first-team all-conference at wideout two years in a row and is also an all-state punter. Baum runs a 4.5 40-yard dash and adds even more speed to the Lights' roster.

The Lights also continued to bolster the offensive line by adding 6-5, 305-pound tackle Ricky Amador from Monterey Peninsula Junior College. Amador will be a junior at MSU-N and was a first-team all-conference selection last year. Juan Garcia, a 6-0, 185-pound kicker/punter from San Mateo Junior College will also transfer to Northern and have years of eligibility remaining. Rounding out the out-of-state signees is Andrew Strycula (6-0, 210) of Redlands, Calif. Strycula played running back and tight end at A.B. Miller H.S.

More in-state recruits include Choteau standout Taylor Buck, another great get for the Lights as well as CMR's Zach McKinley, the younger brother of former Lights' star Luke McKinley.

Buck (6-3, 205) is a stellar defensive end who earned first-team all-conference twice and Class B All-State honors this season for the Bulldogs. Buck was also a star wrestler for the Choteau. McKinley (5-10, 185) was a running back and kicker for the Rustlers and earned Eastern AA second-team all-conference honors.

Rounding out the Montana recruits are Superior’s Tanner Coon and Glasgow’s Brandon Hansard. Coon (6-1, 170) was a First-Team Class B All-State quarterback for Superior and has been selected to the Class B All-Star Game this summer. Hansard (6-2, 245) comes to Northern as a defensive tackle. For the Scotties, he earned Northern B All-Conference honors and was also selected to the Class B All-Star Game.

"We are very excited to announce the signings of these 10 student athletes," Samson said. "All of them are great competitors and will represent our program very well on and off the field. We have signed some very talented high school kids that will be great additions to an already solid recruiting class. Some of them will have the ability to see the field early in their careers and others will definitely be guys that we will count on in a couple years from now."
In all, the Lights have signed 29 players this recruiting season. Northern may sign a few more, and the Lights are headed towards spring practice which is scheduled to start March 23.

"We are very close to wrapping up our recruiting for the year and are anxious to get out and start spring ball," he added. "We have had a great winter so far with our workouts and conditioning program and are very excited to get on the field and start playing football again.”