Four Lights named Frontier All-Conference in football

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For four Montana State University-Northern football players, the 2012 season officially ended last week with some special Frontier Conference accolades.

Lights Brandon O’Brien, Derek Lear, Stephen Silva and Josh Baum were all named Frontier All-Conference for 2012, as the list was released by the league late last week.

O’Brien, a junior wide receiver who earned First-Team Offensive honors, had a breakout campaign in which he led the Frontier in yards-per-catch at 18.2. It was his first time being named to the all-conference team after he caught 46 passes for 806 yards and averaged 90 yards per game. He was third in the Frontier in both receiving yards and receiving yards per game, while his 11 touchdowns was also second in the league.

Silva was named Second-Team Offense at running back, and earned all-conference honors for the fourth year in a row. In his senior season, Northern’s all-time leading rusher ran for 816 yards and six touchdowns, while averaging 82 yards per game, which was fifth in the Frontier this season. Silva had two 100-yard games this season, including running for a school-record 230 yards back on Sept. 29 against Rocky Mountain College.

Lear earned all-conference honors for the second straight season after being named Second-Team offense this season. The junior quarterback from Fairfield shattered several Northern school records this season, including throwing for 26 TD’s. Lear finished the year second in the Frontier in passing with 2,798 yards on 205 completions, while he was also second in the NAIA in total offense after racking up 3,150 yards on the season and averaging 315 yards of offense per game.

Baum, a junior defensive back earned Second-Team Defensive honors after an outstanding season at safety. He was ninth in the Frontier with 76 total tackles, and averaged 7.6 stops per game. Baum also finished the season with four tackles for loss, three pass breakups and one fumble recovery.

Of all the Lights all-conference picks, only Silva will not return next season, while MSU-N, which went 3-7 this season, returns nine starters on defense and eight starters on offense.