



Players to watch:

#7 QB Jakeb Sullivan:

The 2021 Championship Game MVP is back for his fourth season in the ELF but with a new Team, the Berlin Thunder. Sullivan was born on July 1st, 1994, in Rapid City, South Dakota. He attended St Thomas More High School, where he was a four-sport athlete, competing in football, baseball, basketball and track. Sullivan won one baseball and two basketball state titles and was an All-Conference QB for the Cavaliers. He was named the Rapid City Male High School Athlete of the Year in 2013.

Sullivan committed to Division II South Dakota Mines Hardrockers, where he made two All-Conference teams with the Hardrockers and was an All-American honorable mention (2018) and the Hero Sports Division II Quarterback of the Year.

After graduating, Sullivan signed with the Marburg Mercenaries, where he led the GFL in passing yards. The Mercenaries made the playoffs and Sullivan made the GFL All-Star team. He signed with the Vikings in 2020 but did not play for the team.

Sullivan signed with the Frankfurt Galaxy in 2021 and has been the team's QB for the past three seasons. He is the 2021 ELF OPOY and Championship Game MVP and ranks 3rd all-time in passing yards (6,644) and passing touchdowns (70) and has the third highest completion percentage among all quarterbacks with at least 50 attempts (66.25%).

Last season's stats: 1677 passing yards, 16 TDs, 5 INT, 60,78% Compl. Percentage.

#10 WR Robin Wilzeck:

Was born on April 27th, 1999, in Forst. Wilzeck played 14 years of soccer, before starting his football career in 2018 as a U19-player for the Dresden Monarchs. He won the German Bowl with Dresden in 2021, catching 42 passes for 961 receiving yards and 13 touchdowns. After winning the Monarchs' Offensive Rookie of the Year award, Wilzeck got invited to the NFL International combine in 2021.

He is one of the biggest talents in Europe and has an incredible speed. Wilzeck played an amazing but injury-plagued season for the Berlin Thunder in 2022, making him a First-Team All-Star. He was invited to the CFL Global Combine after the season.

Last season's stats: 60 receptions, 947 receiving yards, 7 TDs in 11 games

#4 WR Aaron Jackson:

Was born on April 8th, 1995, in Frankfort, Kentucky. Jackson also called "AJ", was a two-star recruit out of Frankfort high school. After not playing in his freshman season with the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers, Jackson transferred to the Pikeville Bears. The Kentucky native showed promise at the NAIA level, catching 26 passes for 667 yards and 8 TDs and became a First-Team All-Conference and second-team All-American selection, before transferring to Lindsey Wilson.

After two seasons at Lindsey, Jackson transferred to Benedictine College, where he was selected to the All-Conference First-Team and All-America Second-Team in 2018.

In 2019, he joined the Cologne Crocodiles, where he became the team's Offensive MVP and made the GFL All-Star team in 2021 and 2022, leading the league with 91 receptions for 1488 yards and 17 touchdowns last season. Had a workout with the Arizona Cardinals in early 2022.



Last season's stats: 67 receptions, 886 receiving yards, 15 TDs in 11 games

#45 DE Kyle Kitchens:

Was born on January 25th, 1996, Decatur, Georgia. Kitchens played college football at Division II Catawba College. During his four seasons with the team, Kitchens was one of the best players in the country, racking up a school record 38.5 sacks and earning All-Conference and All-American honors three times (2015, 2016, 2017), while also winning the SAC DPOY award twice (2015, 2017).

During his only season in the GFL the Georgia native had 76 total tackles, 31 TFL and a league leading 16 sacks. Kitchens played his first ELF season in 2021 with the Leipzig Kings, where he won the DPOY award with 23 TFL and a league leading 12.5 sacks. He also made the All-Star team.

After signing with the Berlin Thunder for the 2022 season, Kitchens led the league in sacks again, winning the DPOY award for a second time. He was a First-Team All-Star once again. He is holding the ELF record for most sacks in a game (4.5 in Week 8 of 2021). Kitchens has a bachelor's degree in sports management.

And also in his third year last season, Kitchens was able to be named to the 1st All-Star Team for the 3rd time.

Last season's stats: 32 tackles, 21 TFL, 15 sacks, 1 fumble recovery, 2 TD

#0 DE Emil Hovde

Hovde is just 23-years old and played for the Mercer University in the NCAA Division I FCS in 2021 and 2022. As a product of RIG Academy, one of Swedish finest youth programs, Hovde will likely play on the opposite side of two-time defensive player Kyle Kitchens. Hovde also joins Ludvig Myren – another Swedish athlete active for Berlin Thunder. Before joining the Mercer University, the 1,90 m and 105 kg defensive player went through the Göteborg Marvels youth, RIG Academy and later Carlstad Crusaders as well as Clarion University (Div II). In his first season for the Thunders last season, he was able to showcase his talent.

Last season's stats: 42 tackles, 12 TFL, 7 sacks, 1 fumble recovery

#11 LB Ludvig Myrén:

Was born on December 5th, 2000, in Stockholm, Sweden. The Stockholm native started playing football at the age of 16. After two years in the Mean Machines' youth team, Myrén played one year of high school football for the Salida Spartans in the US, where he was selected to the All-League team, before returning to Sweden.

The young linebacker led his team in tackles in his first season at the men's level, earning him the Superserien Rookie of the Year award. Myrén's Mean Machines reached the league finals in 2020 and 2021 but lost.

The Swede joined the Berlin Thunder in 2022, where he won the Thunder Hitstick award. His team-best 93 tackles played a big role in the Thunder's first season above .500. And also in the last season, the Swede was playing exceptional football. He is part of the Top 100 ELF players of the past season.

Last season's stats: 115 tackles, 15.5 TFL, 6 sacks, 2 fumble recoveries, 1 TD

#8 LB Paul Seifert:



Was born on August 24th, 1997, in Bamberg. The 25-year-old practiced karate and capoeira, before starting to play football at the age of 15. The Bamberg native, who is working as a barista, started his career with the TFG Typhoons and later joined the Berlin Rebels.

Seifert played for the Stockholm Mean Machines in 2020, where teamed up with fellow Thunder linebacker Ludvig Myrén, before joining the Berlin Thunder in the European League of Football.

Seifert has been a franchise cornerstone ever since, and he demonstrated this in the past season as one of the top linebackers in the league. It's no coincidence that he is ranked 8th on the ELF Top 100 list.

Last season's stats: 90 tackles, 7 TFL, 2.5 sacks, 2 INT, 2 forced fumbles, 1 fumble recovery, 2 TD

#30 S Alex Spillum:

Was born on March 20th, 1999, in Chanhassen, Minnesota. Spillum was on his high school's football, baseball, basketball, and track team and was one of the best long jumpers in the nation. The athletic freak played quarterback and safety for Chanhassen High School, before committing to Coastal Carolina.

After redshirting his freshman year, Spillum played in every game of his RS freshman season. He made the All-Conference Third-Team in his redshirt sophomore and junior season. Ended his collegiate career with 184 tackles, 5.5 TFL, 1 sack, 7 INT and 17 pass deflections.

Spillum graduated with a degree in business management and is part of the NFF Hampshire Honor Society due to his academic achievements. He participated in the Green Bay Packers' and Tampa Bay Buccaneers' rookie minicamps, before signing with the Schwäbisch Hall Unicorns in 2022.

In the last season, he was an important part of the team, which was able to reach the Wildcard Round.

Last season's stats: 49 tackles, 5 INT, 1 forced fumble, 2 fumble recoveries

Notable Performances:

Stadium:

Friedrich-Ludwig-Jahn-Sportpark:

Capacity: Approximately 10.300 (50% due to fire protection regulation). Friedrich-Ludwig-Jahn-Sportpark will be the Thunder's stadium again. It was opened in October 1952 and is currently undergoing renovations. The stadium hosted the UEFA Women's Champions League Final in 2015, as well as multiple German Bowls and the 2021 European League of Football All-Star game.

Head Coach - Johnny Schmuck:

Schmuck is 41 years old. He won the German Championship with Berlin and the European Championship with Germany, as well as the 2005 World Games as a wide receiver.



Schmuck was a wide receiver coach and later the offensive coordinator for the Berlin Adler. He led the Berlin Thunder to their first winning record in franchise history in 2022 (7-5) and their first playoff appearance last year.

Coaches who inspired him are: Jörg Hoffmann, Lee Rowland and Shuan Fatah. He always tried to learn something from everyone he met during his coaching career. Schmuck also studied the work of different NFL and NCAA coaches but for him it is different to analyze or watch them instead of working close with them together.

Game against Vikings - Strategy, details and more:

-What are your “keys to the game”?

consistency, hard work, dedication to details, love for the game

-What are your goals for this season?

We want to further build this program, we made the playoffs last year so this is our goal again. Its gone be a tough road with the schedule we play, but if we make it anything is possible

-What is your biggest strength as a team?

Actually our biggest strength is 'the team' and the spirit we have. Our defense obviously was a standout the last years and I dont know why this should change.