

# Former Bison Heads to Super Bowl

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## Howard's Geoff Pope in Phoenix with Giants

Geoff Pope, a cornerback for the Howard Bison in the 2006 season, will be the second rookie from Howard to go to the Super Bowl in the last two years.

Pope was picked up by the New York Giants for their practice squad, and injuries on the Giants' squad put Pope on the field. He was featured as a nickel back in New York's win against the Green Bay Packers in the NFC championship.

Safety Antoine Bethea, also from Howard, went with the Indianapolis Colts last year.

"Football is my first love," Pope told The Hilltop last year. "The game is where I feel most comfortable, and it has opened many doors for me."

Pope attended University of Detroit Jesuit High School, which was an all-boys school in his hometown of Detroit.

He went to Eastern Michigan University for two years, and at both high school and college, he played football and ran track.

While racing at Eastern Michigan he injured his quad muscle and was unable to walk for three months, and had to undergo five hours of daily physical therapy to recuperate.

However, due to Pope's injury he did not have much time on the playing field. Pope, feeling mistreated by his coach, transferred to Howard University.

Scouts took notice of Pope's rare speed at 4.21 seconds at Pro Day this year and saw he had great potential.

Pope knew size and speed could not be coached, so he made every effort to dominate in those areas.

Pope sought an agent, who set up training for him at Competitive Edge Sports (CES) during the summer in Atlanta for three months, which trained him for private workouts and NFL mini-camp.

While preparing for the draft, Pope dealt with several injuries over a four-month period.

Pope broke his foot, caught a full body cramp, broke his hand, and caught a staph infection, all of which caused him to

miss some practices. But he never missed a game, and he maintained his speed.

Pope did not get drafted in the 2007 draft but signed a free agent contract with the Miami Dolphins. However, he was released on Sept. 1. But the following day, Pope was signed to the New York Giants.

"If God has something meant for you, you're going to get it," Pope said.

Pope is not the first Bison to make it to the NFL.

In addition to Bethea, who was deafted in 2006, Ronald Bartell was drafted in 2005 and plays for the St. Louis Rams.

Pope has one semester remaining at Howard University.

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