



News Release

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Christian McCaffrey of Stanford is National College Football Return Specialist Award Winner for 2015

OMAHA, Nebraska, Jan. 28, 2016 – The Johnny “The Jet” Rodgers National College Football Return Specialist Award, aka The Jet Award, has selected Christian McCaffrey of Stanford University as its 2015 recipient. Second- and third-place runner-ups are Adoree’ Jackson of the University of Southern California and Janarion Grant of Rutgers University.

“Christian McCaffrey has all the moves I had during my playing days and then some,” said Rodgers, who won the Heisman Trophy in 1972 and is a member of the National College Football Hall of Fame. “He brings a level of excitement to the game like any good return specialist does, and is able to bring his best when it matters the most. We’re proud to name Christian McCaffrey the Jet Award winner for 2015.”

“This Jet Award is a testament to all the efforts and support of my teammates, coaches, staff and the entire Stanford football program,” said McCaffrey, who finished second in the 2015 Heisman Trophy voting.

McCaffrey is the second Jet Award recipient from Stanford; Ty Montgomery of Stanford received the 2013 Jet Award.

The Jet Award is a national award that was established in 2011 to honor the best return specialist in NCAA Division I college football and is named for Rodgers, a wide receiver and return specialist for the University of Nebraska.

In 2015, the Big Ten announced the creation of the Rodgers-Dwight Return Specialist of the Year, named after Rodgers and Tim Dwight of Iowa. The annual trophy honors the conference’s top performer on kickoff and/or punt returns.

To be considered for the Jet Award, players must be a primary kick or punt returner for their team and be among the national leaders in return categories. They must also show leadership, courage, desire, respect for authority, and discipline.

A selection committee consisting of Rodgers and football writers and broadcasters from around the country selected the 2015 Jet Award winner. Besides Montgomery, previous recipients are Tyler Lockett of Kansas State University (2014), Tavon Austin of West Virginia University (2012) and inaugural winner Joe Adams of the University of Arkansas (2011).

An awards ceremony for the 2015 Jet Award, which is a benefit for The Johnny Rodgers Career and Technical Education Scholarship at Metropolitan Community College, will be April 14 in Omaha, Rodgers' hometown and where MCC is located. Former University of Oklahoma running back Joe Washington, who works in the OU athletic department, will be the keynote speaker.

Former University of Oklahoma halfback Greg Pruitt, whose Sooners played against Rodgers' Cornhuskers in the 1971 "Game of the Century" and who finished second to Rodgers in 1972 Heisman Trophy voting, will present the Legacy Award at the dinner.

The Jet Award honors a player from the past who was the best return specialist of his day. The 2014 Legacy Award winner was Paul Allen, who played for Brigham Young University and who was honored for the 1961 season. Seventeen-year NFL veteran Pat Fischer (University of Nebraska) received the 2013 Legacy Award for the 1960 season, while 1959 Heisman Trophy winner Billy Cannon (Louisiana State University) was honored in 2012 for the 1959 season.

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Johnny "The Jet" Rodgers National College Football Return Specialist Award

We Love Great Returns! is the tagline of the Johnny "The Jet" Rodgers National College Football Return Specialist Award, aka The Jet Award. The Jet Award was established in 2011 to honor college football's best return specialist. It was named for 1972 Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Rodgers, who College Football News said is "the greatest kick returner in college football history." For more information about the Jet Award, awards ceremony and the Johnny Rodgers Career and Technical Education Scholarship it funds, go to www.thejetaward.com or call 402-245-0088.