

THE NATIONAL HARLON HILL AWARD COMMITTEE

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TWENTY FOUR CANDIDATES VIE FOR HILL TROPHY AS NCAA DIVISION II FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

FLORENCE - Ala. -- A total of 24 candidates are in the running for the 2009 Harlon Hill Trophy as the NCAA Division II College Football Player of the Year, including two finalists from 2008 and two other players who were candidates last season.

The list of candidates was announced Thursday by the National Harlon Hill Award Committee.

The list includes six players from each of Division II's four Super Regionals.

Players are nominated and voted on by the sports information directors at the 148 NCAA Division II football-playing institutions. The 24 initial candidates will be placed on regional ballots and the top two players from each of the four NCAA regions will advance to the national ballot when regional voting concludes on November 13.

The winner of the 2009 award, which is presented by the National Harlon Hill Award Committee, will be announced at the 24th annual Harlon Hill Trophy Presentation Banquet on Friday, December 11 at the Florence Conference Center at 6:30 p.m. This year's Hill Trophy Banquet will also include the eleventh induction into the Division II Football Hall of Fame, with Shannon Sharpe becoming the 25th inductee.

Tickets are \$50 each or \$400 for a table of eight and can be purchased by calling the Shoals Chamber of Commerce at (256) 764-4661.

The NCAA Division II Championship Game is scheduled for December 12 at Florence's Braly Municipal Stadium at noon.

The Hill Trophy is sponsored by the City of Florence, Ala., Florence-Lauderdale Tourism, Opti-Net, the Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa and Herff Jones.

There were 38 candidates initially nominated by the sports information directors at their respective schools and those nominations were then reviewed by the Hill Regional Advisory Committees, which trimmed the list of candidates.

Hill Add 2 . . .

Among the 2009 candidates are Grand Valley State quarterback Brad Iciek and Edinboro University quarterback Trevor Harris, both of whom were Hill finalists last season. Also appearing on the ballot for the second time are Northwest Missouri State running back LaRon Council and Ashland quarterback Billy Cundiff.

The group of 24 candidates includes 13 quarterbacks, six running backs, four receivers and a linebacker. There are 15 seniors, six juniors and three sophomores.

Among the players vying for the 2009 award from the Super Regional 1 are junior quarterback Zach Amedro of West Liberty (W.V.) University, senior split end Michael Harris of Shippensburg (Pa.) University, senior quarterback Trevor Harris of Edinboro (Pa.) University, junior running back Alfonso Hoggard of Clarion (Pa.) University, senior wide receiver A.J. Jackson of California (Pa.) University and sophomore wide receiver Thomas Mayo of Concord (W.V.) College.

Candidates from Super Regional 2 are senior quarterback Harrison Beck of the University of North Alabama, senior quarterback Alex Good of Carson-Newman (Tenn.) College, senior quarterback Nick Graziano of Arkansas Tech University, senior linebacker Lardester Hicks-Green of Delta State (Miss.) University, senior running back Demetrice Johnson of Albany State University and sophomore running back Jonas Randolph of Mars Hill (N.C.) College.

Super Regional 3 is represented by senior running back Joiqye Bell of Wayne State (Mich.) University, senior quarterback Billy Cundiff of Ashland (Ohio) University, senior quarterback Brad Iciek of Grand Valley State (Mich.) University, senior wide receiver Logan Masters of Wayne State (Neb.) College, senior running back Isaac Odim of the University of Minnesota-Duluth and senior quarterback David Pesek of the Colorado School of Mines.

Selected from Super Regional 4 are senior running back LaRon Council of Northwest Missouri State, junior quarterback Zack Eskridge of Midwestern State (Texas), junior quarterback Steve Gachette of Southwest Baptist (Missouri), senior quarterback Billy Garza of Texas A&M University-Kingsville, sophomore quarterback J.J. Harp of Eastern New Mexico University and junior quarterback Drew Newhart of Missouri Western University.

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North Dakota State quarterback Jeff Bentrin won the initial Hill Trophy in 1986, followed by three-time winner - Texas A&I (now Texas A&M-Kingsville) running back Johnny Bailey - in 1987, 1988 and 1989.

Another North Dakota State quarterback, Chris Simdorn, claimed the 1990 award, followed by Pittsburg State receiver Ronnie West in 1991, Pittsburg State running back Ronald Moore in 1992, New Haven running back Roger Graham in 1993, Valdosta State quarterback Chris Hatcher in 1994.

North Alabama linebacker Ronald McKinnon became the first and so far only defensive player to win the award in 1995, followed by Truman State running back Jarrett Anderson in 1996, Bloomsburg University running back Irvin Sigler in 1997, Emporia State running back Brian Shay in 1998 and Northern Colorado quarterback Corte McGuffey in 1999.

The award had its second two-time winner when Valdosta State quarterback Dusty Bonner claimed the Hill Trophy in 2000 and 2001.

Grand Valley State quarterback Curt Anes won the Hill Trophy in 2002, followed by North Alabama quarterback Will Hall in 2003, Colorado School of Mines quarterback Chad Frieauf in 2004, East Stroudsburg's Jimmy Terwilliger in 2005, Chadron State's Danny Woodhead in 2006 and 2007 and Abilene Christian's Bernard Scott in 2008.

2009 Harlon Hill Trophy Candidates

SUPER REGIONAL 1	Pos.	Ht	Wt	Cl	School	Hometown
Zach Amedro	QB	6-0	190	JR	West Liberty	Moundsville, W.V.
Michael Harris	SE	6-1	192	SR	Shippensburg	East Earl, Pa.
Trevor Harris	QB	6-2	215	SR	Edinboro	Waldo, Ohio
Alfonso Hoggard	RB	5-4	150	JR	Clarion	Philadelphia, Pa.
A.J. Jackson	WR	6-6	230	SR	California, Pa.	Lehigh Acres, Fla.
Thomas Mayo	WR	6-2	184	SO	Concord	Reston, Va.
SUPER REGIONAL 2	Pos.	Ht	Wt	Cl	School	Hometown
Harrison Beck	QB	6-2	220	SR	North Alabama	Claerwater, Fla.
Alex Good	QB	6-0	185	SR	Carson-Newman	Greensboro, N.C.
Nick Graziano	QB	6-1	227	SR	Arkansas Tech	Moraga, Calif.
Lardester Hicks-Green	LB	6-1	235	SR	Delta State	Chicago, Ill.
Demetrice Johnson	RB	5-11	210	SR	Albany State	Atlanta, Ga.
Jonas Randolph	RB	5-10	185	SO	Mars Hill	Daleville, Ala.
SUPER REGIONAL 3	Pos.	Ht	Wt	Cl	School	Hometown
Joiqee Bell	RB	6-1	223	SR	Wayne State (Mich.)	Benton Harbor, Mich.
Billy Cundiff	QB	6-2	218	SR	Ashland	Uniontown, Ohio
Brad Iciek	QB	6-1	200	SR	Grand Valley State	Grandville, Mich.
Logan Masters	WR	6-3	185	SR	Wayne State (Neb.)	Storm Lake, Iowa
Isaac Odum	RB	6-0	215	JR	Minnesota-Duluth	Rochester, Minn.
David Pesek	QB	6-3	210	SR	Colorado-Mines	Centennial, Colorado
SUPER REGIONAL 4	Pos.	Ht	Wt	Cl	School	Hometown
LaRon Council	RB	5-10	210	SR	Northwest Missouri St.	Kansas City, Mo.
Zack Eskridge	QB	6-4	215	JR	Midwestern State	Rowlett, Texas
Steve Gachette	QB	6-1	180	JR	Southwest Baptist	Lehigh Acres, Fla.
Billy Garza	QB	6-1	235	SR	Texas A&M-Kingsville	Brownsville, Texas
J.J. Harp	QB	6-2	180	SO	Eastern New Mexico	Argyle, Texas
Drew Newhart	QB	6-0	200	JR	Missouri Western	Cameron, Missouri