



## NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS ASSOCIATION

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### NCBWA ANNOUNCES DISTRICT PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

**TUSCALOOSA, Ala.** - Nine of college baseball's finest student-athletes have been named 2009 National Collegiate Baseball Writers of America District Players of the Year, as the NCBWA announced its 10th annual awards today.

The 2009 NCBWA District Players of the Year include first baseman/pitcher Mike Belfiore (Boston College), shortstop Jedd Gyorko (West Virginia), right fielder Kent Matthes (Alabama), first baseman Rich Poythress (Georgia), second baseman Derek McCallum (Minnesota), pitcher A.J. Morris (Kansas State), third baseman Anthony Rendon (Rice), third baseman Bryan Marquez (New Mexico State) and pitcher Stephen Strasburg (San Diego State).

Belfiore is the District I Player of the Year after leading Boston College to its first NCAA Tournament appearance since 1967. A two-way player, he was among the semi-finalists for the Stopper of the Year Award, presented by the NCBWA. Belfiore was a Second Team All-ACC performer this season.

The Commack, N.Y., native started 59 games and hit .273 (63-for-231) with 11 home runs and 62 RBI for the Eagles. The 62 RBI ranks fourth on the school's single-season list. He also scored 44 runs and added 17 doubles for a team that ranks seventh nationally with 151 two-base hits in 2009. One of the Eagles' top clutch hitters, Belfiore had 31 of his 62 RBI this season with two outs. He hit a game-winning, walk-off grand slam against LeMoyne on May 10 to cap a six-run ninth inning and give BC a dramatic 10-6 win. On the mound, he was outstanding, posting a 5-1 record with nine saves and a 2.05 ERA in 25 appearances. The left-hander worked 48 1/3 innings and allowed 15 runs (11 ER) on 44 hits, with 12 walks and 59 strikeouts, while holding opponents to a .237 batting average.

Gyorko is the District II Player of the Year after a stellar season at West Virginia, after making the smooth transition from second base to shortstop this season. He is one of five finalists for the Brooks Wallace Award, given annually to the nation's best shortstop. Gyorko is also one of 36 players invited to try out for the USA National Collegiate Baseball Team. A First Team All-Big East and Second Team *Collegiate Baseball Newspaper*/Louisville Slugger selection, Gyorko is nine hits shy of 200 hits after just two seasons at WVU. He ranks second in the nation in doubles (28), third in doubles per game (0.51), 16<sup>th</sup> in hits (96) and 21<sup>st</sup> in average (.421).

A native of Morgantown, W.Va., Gyorko completed his sophomore campaign with a .421 average, eight home runs and 58 RBI and set the single-season school record with 28 doubles. He also led the Mountaineers with 150 total bases and 96 hits and 31 multi-hit games. He also amassed 74 runs and had a .658 slugging mark. Gyorko started all 55 games for WVU, batting .375 with four home runs and 25 RBI in conference play and ended the season with a 14-game hitting streak. At the 2009 Big East Tournament, Gyorko hit .636 (7-for-11) with five RBI, six runs scored and one double. He went 19 games without committing an error at shortstop from March 21-April 18.

Matthes is the District III Player of the Year and the 2009 SEC Player of the Year, after setting the Alabama single-season record with 28 home runs. He broke the 23-year old record of 27 home runs held by Doug Duke in 1986. Matthes is a finalist for the 2009 Golden Spikes Award, presented by USA Baseball, and is a semi-finalist for the Dick Howser Trophy, presented to the national player of the year by the NCBWA. He was named to the 2009 *Collegiate Baseball Newspaper*/Louisville Slugger All-American Team, becoming the eighth first-team All-American under head coach Jim Wells. He was also one of a school-record tying five Alabama players to be named First-Team All-SEC this season. He is the third UA player to win District III Player of the Year honors, joining Andy Phillips (1999) and Beau Heard (2001).

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The Orlando, Fla., native led the nation in home runs (28) and ranked second in home runs per game (0.5), third in slugging percentage (.858), sixth in RBI per game (1.45), ninth in RBI (81) and 10<sup>th</sup> in total bases (175). In 58 games, he hit .358 (73-for-204) with 28 home runs and 81 RBI. He led the Tide in runs scored (67), home runs (28), RBI (81), total bases (175), slugging percentage (.858), sac flies (6), intentional walks (5), on-base percentage (.464) and stolen bases (13). In SEC play, he hit .330 (35-for-106) with 13 home runs and 35 RBI in 29 games. Matthes opened the season with an 18-game hitting streak and was one of three UA players to hit for the cycle this season, when he went 4-for-5 with five RBI in a win over Nicholls State on Feb. 24. He also set the school record with a home run in six straight games. For the season, Matthes hit 15 game-tying or go-ahead home runs and he led the Tide with 10 game-winning RBI. He was twice named National Player of the Week and SEC Player of the Week (March 2 and March 16) this season.

Poythress is the District IV Player of the Year and the second straight Georgia Bulldog to win the honor. Gordon Beckham, the 2008 SEC Player of the Year, took home the honor last season. He was a second team selection to the Collegiate Baseball Newspaper/Louisville Slugger All-American squad. He was also named first team All-SEC and a semifinalist for the Dick Howser Trophy and the Golden Spikes Award. He was also named to the SEC's All-Defensive Team.

The Grovetown, Ga., native was second nationally with 86 RBI this season. Poythress also ranked fifth in home runs (25), sixth in total bases (181), 11<sup>th</sup> in home runs per game (0.40), 16<sup>th</sup> in RBI per game (1.39) and 18<sup>th</sup> in slugging percentage (.764). He wrapped up the season with a .376 average, 25 home runs and a single season school record 86 RBI. Poythress became the first player in Georgia history to have two 70-RBI seasons and is the second player in program history to have two three-home run games after launching three homers in the Bulldogs 24-8 win over Ohio State in the Tallahassee Regional. He is second on Georgia's career RBI list with 185 and fifth on the career home runs list with 43. Poythress helped guide the Bulldogs to a 38-24 record in 2009 and the program's first in-season No.1 ranking. He is the 18th All-American in Georgia baseball history.

McCallum is the District V Player of the Year after leading the Golden Gophers to a second place finish in the Big Ten Conference regular season and tournament play. He was a semi-finalist for the 2009 Dick Howser Trophy, the only second baseman and Big Ten player among the final 16 players. McCallum was also a unanimous All-Big Ten selection at second base and was one of only three Big Ten players to earn unanimous all conference selections. He was named to the All-Big Ten Tournament Team after reaching base in 14 of 23 plate appearances and hitting .438 (7-for-16) with six runs scored, two homers and seven RBI.

A native of Shoreview, Minn., McCallum was second nationally with 86 RBI this season and ranked fifth in RBI per game (1.46), 11<sup>th</sup> in total bases (172) and 43<sup>rd</sup> in hitting (.409). Overall, he hit .409 (95-for-232) with 18 home runs and 86 RBI in 59 starts. In Big Ten play, McCallum hit .440 (40-for-91) with eight homers and 36 RBI in 23 games. He had at least one RBI in 10 straight games on two different occasions this season and was named National and Big Ten Player of the Week on April 20.

Morris is the District VI Player of the Year after earning Big 12 Pitcher of the Year honors after stellar season with the Kansas State Wildcats, leading them to their first-ever NCAA appearance. He is a finalist for the Golden Spikes Award and a semi-finalist for the Dick Howser trophy. Morris, who became the first Wildcat since Craig Wilson in 1992 to earn first team All-American status, is the first Wildcat to be named a finalist for the Golden Spikes Award.

A native of Humble, Texas, Morris finished the season as the school's single-season record holder for wins (14), strikeouts (100), innings pitched (116.1) and games started (16). His 14 wins were also tied for the third most in Big 12 history, while his 2.09 ERA was the seventh lowest in school history. Overall, he compiled a 14-1 record and 2.09 ERA in 16 starts for KSU. He added five complete games and logged 100 strikeouts and 116 1/3 innings. He was 10<sup>th</sup> nationally this season in ERA and 29<sup>th</sup> in strikeouts.

Rendon won District VII Player of the Year honors after being named the 2009 National and Conference USA Freshman of the Year. He is the fifth Conference USA Player to earn National Freshman of the Year honors, following Rice's Ryan Berry (2007), East Carolina's Darryl Lawhorn (2002) and Tulane's Michael Aubrey (2001) and James Jurries (1999). He also becomes the eighth different Rice player since 2002 to earn at least co-National Freshman of the Year honors, following Berry, Joe Savery (2005), Jeff Niemann (2003), Philip Humber (2002), Vincent Sinisi (2002), Mario Ramos (1999), Damon Thames (1998) and Lance Berkman (1997).

Rendon, who is also a national semifinalist for the Dick Howser Trophy as well as the Golden Spikes Award, is the first player in Conference USA history to be named both the Player of the Year and Freshman of the Year in the same season. Rendon was also named C-USA Tournament Most Valuable Player after leading the Owls to their third tournament title in four years. The standout from nearby Lamar High School in Houston has had a sensational debut at the Division I level, leading the conference in batting average (.384) and home runs with a Rice freshman record 19. He also leads C-USA in slugging percentage (.688) and tops the Owls in RBI (70). Rendon has scored 57 runs, walked 31 times and added 13 doubles, while striking out just 22 times in 237 at-bats.

Marquez is the District VIII Player of the Year after leading the Cowboys to one of the most productive offensive seasons in school history. NMSU set single-season records for wins (44), hits (722), home runs (119), extra base hits (285), RBI (628), total bases (1,310), on-base percentage (.469) and slugging (.599). New Mexico State led the nation in scoring (11.0), runs (668), slugging (.599) and walks (416) and rank second nationally in home runs (119) and home runs per game (1.95). Marquez ranked in the top 10 nationally in runs scored (3<sup>rd</sup>), RBI (4<sup>th</sup>), on-base percentage (5<sup>th</sup>) and slugging (8<sup>th</sup>). He was also among the top 20 national leaders in RBI per game, home runs, total bases and home runs per game.

A native of Bonny Lake, Wash., Marquez was a First Team Collegiate Baseball Newspaper/Louisville Slugger All-American and First-Team All-WAC performer. He hit .414 (89-for-215) with 22 home runs and 85 RBI, while adding 83 runs scored and 14 doubles. He was named National Player of the Week and WAC Hitter of the Week on March 16.

Strasburg is the District IX Player of the Year for the second straight season, after sharing district honors with San Diego's Brian Matusz last season. A First Team All-American selection by Collegiate Baseball Newspaper/Louisville Slugger, Strasburg is a finalist for the Golden Spikes Award and semi-finalist for the Dick Howser Trophy. For the second year in a row, the right-hander led the nation in strikeouts (195) and strikeouts per nine innings (16.1) as the Aztecs advanced to the NCAA Irvine (Calif.) Regional. Strasburg was also second nationally in ERA (1.32) and hits per nine innings (5.37) and third in wins (13).

The San Diego, Calif., native compiled a 13-1 record and 1.32 ERA this season. Strasburg worked 109 innings and added 195 strikeouts. He pitched his first career no-hitter against Air Force (May 8), with 17 strikeouts. He held a record of 8-0 with a 1.07 ERA (7 ER/59/1 IP) in eight road/neutral starts this season. Strasburg struck out at least 10 batters in 13 of his 15 starts and walked three walks or fewer in 27 of his 28 career starts. He had his streak of 57 consecutive innings where he allowed one run or fewer broken in the seventh inning of his April 24 start vs. TCU.

The group, divided into areas as follows: District I-Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania; District II: Connecticut, West Virginia, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, District of Columbia; III: Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida; IV: Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland; V: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin; VI: Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota; VII: Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana; VIII: Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, Montana; District IX: California, Oregon, Washington, Hawai'i, Arizona, Alaska.

***Stats through games of June 1, 2009:***

<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Avg.</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>2B-3B-HR</b>	<b>RBI</b>
UTIL	Mike Belfiore, Boston College	Jr.	.273	59	231	44	63	17-1-11	62
SS	Jedd Gyorko, West Virginia	So.	.421	55	228	74	96	28-1-8	58
RF	Kent Matthes, Alabama	Sr.	.358	59	204	67	73	14-2-28	81
1B	Rich Poythress, Georgia	Jr.	.376	62	237	69	89	17-0-25	86
2B	Derek McCallum, Minnesota	Jr.	.409	59	232	57	95	17-3-18	86
3B	Alex Rendon, Rice	Fr.	.384	59	237	57	91	13-1-19	70
SS	Bryan Marquez, New Mexico St.	Sr.	.414	60	215	83	89	14-1-22	85

<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>W-L</b>	<b>ERA</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>IP</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>BB</b>	<b>SO</b>	<b>SV</b>
UTIL	Mike Belfiore, Boston College	Jr.	5-1	2.05	26	48.1	44	12	59	9
RHP	A.J. Morris, Kansas State	Jr.	14-1	2.09	16	116.1	98	30	100	0
RHP	Stephen Strasburg, San Diego St.	Jr.	13-1	1.32	15	109.0	65	19	195	0