



DICK HOWSER TROPHY COMMITTEE

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Kentucky's Reed Chosen as 28th Dick Howser Trophy Recipient

OMAHA, Neb. – Kentucky junior pitcher/first baseman A.J. Reed, who enjoyed possibly the greatest individual season in UK history this year, is the 28th recipient of the Dick Howser Trophy, presented by Easton Foundations, as college baseball's Player of the Year. The presentation was made Saturday during a national news conference at TD Ameritrade Park, site of the 2014 College World Series.

The Dick Howser Trophy, given in memory of the former Florida State University All-America shortstop and Major League player and manager, who died of brain cancer in 1987, is regarded by many as college baseball's most prestigious award. Criteria for consideration for the trophy include performance on the field, leadership, moral character, and courage, qualities which were exemplified by Dick Howser's life.

“It is of utmost importance for the Dick Howser Trophy Committee to identify the top college baseball player in the country not only based on ability,” David Feaster, the committee’s executive director said. “However – equally important if not more, are the qualities that make up the spirit of the Trophy’s namesake, Dick Howser – leadership, character and courage.

“A.J. Reed embodies all of the qualities that we identify when selecting the award winner. His numbers both as a hitter and pitcher were at the top of one of the nation’s finest leagues, the Southeastern Conference. His numbers speak for the outstanding season he had – and he did it with excellent sportsmanship and class.”

Reed, who leads the nation in home runs with 23, slugging percentage at .735 and OPS (batting average + slugging percentage) at 1.211, also had a 12-2 pitching record for coach Gary Henderson’s Wildcats. He is Kentucky’s first national baseball player of the year and is bidding to become the third consensus national player from the Southeastern Conference, along with 2007 Howser Trophy recipient David Price of Vanderbilt and Alabama’s David Magadan, the 1985 honoree and current hitting coach for the Texas Rangers.

The native of basketball-famous Terre Haute, Ind., batted .336 with 73 RBI and a .476 on-base percentage for the '14 Wildcats. He also started 16 games for Kentucky, had a 2.09 earned run average, gave up 98 hits in 112 innings of work, struck out 71 hitters, and walked only 29. He accounted for just under one-third (12) of the 37-25 Wildcats’ total team victories.

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The 6-4, 240-pound SEC Player of the Year adds the Dick Howser Trophy to an arm's length list of accomplishments this year. A finalist for the 2014 USA Baseball Golden Spikes Award, he already has earned first team All-America honors from the NCBWA and *Collegiate Baseball*, has been tabbed the NCBWA District III Player of the Year, and been multi-honored with NCBWA Division I, NCAA.com and Louisville Slugger *Collegiate Baseball* National Hitter of the Week honors during the campaign.

Reed's consistency at the plate and on the mound is reflected by career totals of 35 doubles, 40 home runs, 160 RBIs, a .559 slugging percentage, .415 on-base percentage, and .306 batting average in 172 games since 2012. His breakout season on the hill more than doubled his career wins' tally, and he has a 2.83 earned run average with just 53 walks and 174 career strikeouts in 248 all-time innings.

Some of his numerous season record highlights for UK in 2014 have been the school home run record, second-highest pitching victory total, second-most walks by a Kentucky hitter, third-most RBI, third-best pitching winning percentage (minimum 10 decisions) at .857, fifth-highest total base numbers, fifth-lowest ERA, and the No. 6 slugging percentage in one year. His career marks at the Lexington university are second-most homers (40) and RBI (160) and Top 12 positions in total bases, at-bats, walks (99), sacrifice flies (nine), hit by pitches (26), ERA, wins and innings pitched.

The 2014 National Player of the Year also was selected in the second round of the recent Major League Baseball first-year player's draft by the Houston Astros. He is just the eighth Kentucky standout drafted in the first or second rounds of MLB selections and helped UK advance to the 2014 NCAA Louisville Regional, where the team finished second.

Reed was one of five fellow standouts who were 2014 Howser Trophy finalists along with Oregon State outfielder Michael Conforto, LSU pitcher Aaron Nola, Kennesaw State catcher Max Pentecost, and Oregon State pitcher Ben Wetzler. He is the sixth player from the SEC to achieve this honor since 1987.

A Florida native, Howser was twice an All-America shortstop at Florida State (1957-58), then head coach of the Seminoles in 1979 after a career as a Major League player and coach. After one year in the college ranks, he returned to the majors to manage the New York Yankees and Kansas City Royals and won the World Series with the Royals in 1985. The baseball stadium on the Florida State campus is named for Howser.

NCBWA membership includes writers, broadcasters and publicists. Designed to promote and publicize college baseball, it is the sport's only college media-related organization, founded in 1962.

The Howser Trophy was created in 1987, shortly after Howser's death. Previous winners of the Howser Trophy are Mike Fiore, Miami, 1987; Robin Ventura, Oklahoma State, 1988; Scott Bryant, Texas, 1989; Alex Fernandez, Miami-Dade Community College South, 1990; Frank Rodriguez, Howard College (Texas), 1991; Brooks Kieschnick, Texas, 1992 and 1993; Jason Varitek, Georgia Tech, 1994; Todd Helton, Tennessee, 1995; Kris Benson, Clemson, 1996; J. D. Drew, Florida State, 1997; Eddy Furniss, LSU, 1998; Jason Jennings, Baylor, 1999; Mark Teixeira, Georgia Tech, 2000; Mark Prior, P, USC, 2001, Khalil Greene, SS, Clemson, 2002; Rickie Weeks, 2B, Southern U., 2003; Jered Weaver, P, Long Beach State, 2004; Alex Gordon, 3B, Nebraska, 2005; Brad Lincoln, P/DH, Houston, 2006; David Price, P, Vanderbilt, 2007; Buster Posey, C, Florida State, 2008; Stephen Strasburg, P, San Diego State, 2009; Anthony Rendon, 3B, Rice, 2010; Taylor Jungmann, P, Texas, 2011; Mike Zunino, C, Florida, 2012; Kris Bryant, 3B, San Diego, 2013; and A.J. Reed, Kentucky, 2014.