



NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS ASSOCIATION

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Contact: Malcolm Gray (graym@ecu.edu or 252-737-4523)
NCBWA Assistant Executive Director

NCBWA ANNOUNCES 2018 STOPPER OF THE YEAR PRESEASON WATCH LIST

GREENVILLE, N.C. (NCBWA) – Fifty-four players have been named to the initial Watch List for the 14th annual National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association Stopper of the Year Award, given to the top relief pitcher in NCAA Division I Baseball, the association announced Monday.

Florida's Michael Byrne, North Carolina's Josh Hiatt and Oregon's Kenyon Yovan were all finalists from a year ago for an award that was captured in 2017 by Louisville's Lincoln Henzman.

The Southeastern Conference had the most representation with eight players finding their names on the watch list. That group is headlined by Byrne, who registered a nation-leading 19 saves while sporting a 1.67 ERA in 38 appearances. Hiatt (13 saves) is one of seven players from the Atlantic Coast Conference, while Yovan (15 saves) is one of four from the Pac-12.

More than a third of the players on this list recorded double-digit saves a season ago and 15 were named to the 2018 NCBWA Preseason All-American team. Five of those preseason All-Americans posted a sub-1.50 ERA's last year in Louisville's Sam Bordner (0.41 ERA, 16 saves), UIC's Alex Padilla (0.45 ERA, 10 saves), Purdue's Ross Learnard (0.58 ERA, 4 saves), Oregon State's Jake Mulholland (1.20 ERA, 6 saves) and Cal State Fullerton's Brett Conine (1.39 ERA, 15 saves).

In total, 18 conferences are represented on this list with at least two players coming from 12 different leagues.

Texas hurler J. Brent Cox won the inaugural Stopper of the Year Award in 2005, with Don Czyz of Kansas claiming the honor in 2006 and Luke Prihoda of Sam Houston State winning it in 2007. Georgia's Joshua Fields topped the field in 2008, San Diego State's Addison Reed grabbed the honor in 2009 and Texas' Chance Ruffin earned the honor in 2010. The Longhorns' Corey Knebel won in 2011, with Southeastern Louisiana's Stefan Lopez picking up the honor in 2012. UCLA's David Berg was crowned the winner in 2013, Louisville's Nick Burdi took home the 2014 honor and Berg became the award's first two-time winner in 2015. Miami (Fla.)'s Bryan Garcia was honored as the 2016 recipient followed by the Cardinals' Henzman in 2017.

The NCBWA, founded in 1962, presents the Dick Howser Trophy to the nation's top player. It also selects All-America Teams for all Divisions, a Division I Freshman All-American team, Division I, II and III Players of the Week and Division I, II and III Players of the Year.

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2018 NCBWA STOPPER OF THE YEAR PRESEASON WATCH LIST

Louis Alvarado	Nebraska	Sr.	Big Ten
T.J. Baker	Ball State	Jr.	Mid-American
Sam Bordner	Louisville	Jr.	ACC
Robert Broom	Mercer	Jr.	Southern
Wyatt Burns	Samford	Sr.	Southern
Michael Byrne	Florida	Jr.	SEC
Andrew Cabezas	Miami, Fla.	Jr.	Atlantic Coast
Michael Clark	Cal Poly	Jr.	Big West
Calvin Coker	Auburn	Sr.	SEC
Brett Conine	Cal State Fullerton	Jr.	Big West
Clark Cota	UNC Wilmington	Jr.	Colonial Athletic
Jared Datoc	Georgia Tech	Sr.	ACC
Naithen Dewsnap	CSU Bakersfield	Sr.	Western Athletic
Tanner Driskill	Lamar	Sr.	Southland
Durbin Feltman	TCU	Jr.	Big 12
Aaron Fletcher	Houston	Jr.	American Athletic
Jake Fromson	Missouri State	Sr.	Missouri Valley
Ryley Gilliam	Clemson	Jr.	ACC
Josh Hiatt	North Carolina	So.	ACC
Connor Higgins	Arizona State	Jr.	Pac-12
Daniel James	UT Arlington	Sr.	Sun Belt
Kevin Kelly	James Madison	So.	Colonial Athletic
Zach King	Vanderbilt	So.	SEC
Ross Learnard	Purdue	Sr.	Big Ten
Matt Lloyd	Indiana	Jr.	Big Ten
Chris Machamer	Kentucky	So.	SEC
Erik Martinez	California	Sr.	Pac-12
Mason McReaken	SIUE	Sr.	Ohio Valley
Morgan McSweeney	Wake Forest	So.	ACC
Nick Mikolajchak	Sam Houston State	So.	Southland
Troy Montemayor	Baylor	Sr.	Big 12
Jake Mulholland	Oregon State	So.	Pac-12
Ryan Netemeyer	Southern Illinois	Sr.	Missouri Valley
J.T. Newton	Houston Baptist	Jr.	Southland
Joe O'Donnell	NC State	Sr.	ACC
Alex Padilla	UIC	Jr.	Horizon

Andrew Perez	USF	Jr.	American Athletic
P.J. Poulin	UConn	Jr.	American Athletic
Beau Ridgeway	Texas	Jr.	Big 12
Chris Rivera	Long Beach State	Jr.	Big West
Brian Rodriguez	Northeastern	So.	Colonial Athletic
Jake Roehn	Ohio	Sr.	Mid-American
Nick Sandlin	Southern Miss	Jr.	Conference USA
Riley Self	Mississippi State	So.	SEC
T.J. Sikkema	Missouri	So.	SEC
Cason Sherrod	Texas A&M	Sr.	SEC
Cody Smith	Charleston Southern	Sr.	Big South
Nick Spear	Mercer	Jr.	Southern
Tyler Starks	Stephen F. Austin	Jr.	Southland
Dylan Thomas	Hawai'i	So.	Big West
Bryce Tucker	UCF	Jr.	American Athletic
Dallas Woolfork	Mississippi	Jr.	SEC
Kenyon Yovan	Oregon	So.	Pac-12
Braden Zarbnisky	West Virginia	Jr.	Big 12

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