



**Dick Howser Trophy**  
presented by  
**The Game Headwear**



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**ARKANSAS' KEVIN KOPPS WINS 34TH DICK HOWSER TROPHY**

**DALLAS (June 18, 2021)** – There is a saying with 2021 Arkansas Razorbacks baseball in the late innings: “Call the Kopps.”

Yes, that is 2021 Dick Howser Trophy presented by The Game Headwear recipient Kevin Kopps, the Arkansas relief ace just completed arguably the most impressive season performance by a reliever in college baseball history. Kopps becomes the first primarily relief hurler in the history of the award.

“Kevin Kopps had a simply amazing season,” said David Feaster, chair of the Dick Howser Trophy Committee presented by The Game Headwear. “To accomplish what he did as a pitcher after the COVID-19 pandemic and Tommy John surgery is extremely admirable. He literally placed the Arkansas team on his back and made the Razorbacks the No. 1 squad nationally for most of the 2021 season.”

The 6-foot-0, 200-pound senior from Sugar Land, Texas (George Ranch High School) put together a magical campaign with statistics previously unheard of for a closer in college baseball. He becomes the second Razorback to receive the Dick Howser Trophy joining former Boston Red Sox and current Kansas City Royals standout Andrew Benintendi in 2015. Both Arkansas stalwarts played for heralded head coach Dave Van Horn.

Kopps also has become the first student-athlete to win the Dick Howser Trophy presented by The Game Headwear and the coveted 16th 2021 NCBWA Stopper of the Year Award for his mound exploits.

Kopps, the 2021 Southeastern Conference Pitcher of the Year and Collegiate Baseball magazine National Player of the Year, had a hand in 23 of the Razorbacks 50 victories in '21 with a 12-1 record and 11 saves.

He allowed just nine earned runs in 89 2/3 innings, appeared in 33 contests (32 in relief), struck out 131 hitters (13.1 per nine innings), walked only 18 batters, allowed 50 hits (just five hits every nine frames), had an 0.90 earned run average to lead NCAA Division I, allowed opponents a .162 batting average, and paced the Razorbacks to a No. 1 national ranking throughout the regular season and the No. 1 seed in the NCAA Baseball Championship.

The 2021 award marks the 23rd consecutive year (1998) for the NCBWA to administer national voting with the Dick Howser Trophy Committee. He is a 2021 consensus All-America choice and the eighth all-time winner from the Southeastern Conference and the first since Brady Singer of Florida in 2018. The 2020 Dick Howser Trophy was not presented due to the cancellation of the baseball season in March '20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kopps developed some new pitches in the offseason from 2020 to '21 and went from a sparingly-used middle innings relief man to a national standout. After having Tommy John surgery prior to the 2018 campaign at UA, the righthander bounced back in 2019 with a 6-3 mark in 30 appearances in relief roles.

He graduated in May 2020 with his bachelor's degree in biomedical engineering and is currently pursuing his master's degree in business administration.

Kopps edged out a sterling group of 2021 Howser Trophy finalists, including Vanderbilt pitchers Kumar Rocker and Jack Leiter, Florida State catcher Matheu Nelson and Texas Tech second baseman Jace Jung after a series of national ballots by the NCBWA.

A Florida native, Dick Howser was twice an All-America shortstop at Florida State University (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 FSU campus is named for Howser.

The Dick Howser Trophy honors the most outstanding collegiate player each year, but it also is based upon the tenets of - leadership, moral character and courage. The top draft choices for the upcoming Major League Baseball free agent draft usually are among the Howser Trophy finalists, but this is not a criterion for the eventual winner.

The NCBWA national 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 presented by The Game Headwear was created in 1987 shortly after Howser's death. Previous winners of the Howser Trophy are Mike Fiore, Miami, Fla., 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; A.J. Reed, Kentucky, 2014; Andrew Benintendi, Arkansas, 2015; Seth Beer, Clemson, 2016; and Brendan McKay, Louisville, 2017; Brady Singer, Florida, 2018; Adley Rutschman, 2019.

Pos.	Name , School, Year	W-L	ERA	APP	GS	CG	SHO	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	OPP	BA
RP	Kevin Kopps, Arkansas, r-Sr.	12-1	0.90	33	1	0	0/3	11	89.2	50	9	9	18	131	.162	

- [www.ncbwa.com](http://www.ncbwa.com); [www.thegameheadwear.com](http://www.thegameheadwear.com); [www.dickhowsertrophy.org](http://www.dickhowsertrophy.org). -