



Oct. 26, 2021

## **Noah Cain of Penn State, Cole Maxwell of Baylor and Patrick Paul of Houston Named 2021 Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award Nominees**

**NEW YORK, NY.** —The College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA), in association with The Associated Press (AP) and the Fiesta Bowl Organization has selected three college football student-athletes — **Noah Cain**, a junior running back for Penn State University; **Cole Maxwell**, a senior defensive lineman for Baylor University; and **Patrick Paul**, a redshirt freshman offensive tackle for the University of Houston — as nominees for the **2021 [Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award](#)**.

Ten times during the 2021 college football season, three inspiring student-athletes from all levels of college football who have overcome injury, illness, or other challenges, are recognized as **Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Nominees** by a panel of writers, editors, and sports information directors from CoSIDA, AP and *Touchdown Illustrated*. In December, three of the 30 nominees will be chosen as winners of the **Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award** and will be recognized at a special ceremony during the PlayStation® Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 1, 2022, at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Arizona. CoSIDA members can nominate football student-athletes until Nov. 1, 2021 at [Comeback-Player.com](#).

Other nominees so far this season are: **Terrel Bernard** (LB, Baylor); **Yohance Burnett** (LB, Tulsa); **Sean Chambers** (QB, Wyoming); **Jack Coan** (QB, Notre Dame); **Tobias Harris** (DB, West Texas A&M); **Aidan Hutchinson** (DE, Michigan); **Brian Kearns, Jr** (RB, Stonehill College); **Alex Keith** (DL, Washington & Jefferson College); **McKenzie Milton** (QB, Florida State); **John Mitchell** (TE, Florida Atlantic); **Jeremiah Moon** (LB, Florida); **Reggie Roberson, Jr** (WR, SMU); **Justyn Ross** (WR, Clemson); **Avery Samuels** (OL, Stetson); **Corey Sutton** (WR, Appalachian State); **Skylar Thompson** (QB, Kansas State); and **J.J. Weaver** (LB, Kentucky).

Here's a look at the inspiring stories of this week's three honorees:

**Noah Cain, a junior running back for Penn State University**, earned the starting position for the 2020 Nittany Lions after an impressive 2019 freshman campaign in which he rushed for 483 yards and a school freshman record eight touchdowns in just 10 games. Unfortunately, on the first drive of the 2020 season opener versus Indiana, he suffered an injury that would sideline him for the remainder of the season. The native of Baton Rouge, La., earned back the starting position in 2021 in a very talented Penn State backfield. Through seven games, the 5-foot-10, 220-pound halfback leads the Nittany Lions with 78 carries, 245 yards and four TDs, including scores in the first three games of the season. Additionally, he leads all running backs with 10 receptions for 69 yards.

**Cole Maxwell, a senior defensive lineman for Baylor University**, has come back from two ACL injuries in his collegiate career. The first injury, to his left knee, came in practice during his redshirt freshman season (2018). Following a year of rehabilitation, in just his second career game in 2019 versus Iowa State, the native of Allen, Texas, tore the ACL in his right knee. The 6-foot-5, 295-pound defensive tackle appeared in a limited role in 2020. But this season, the fifth-year senior — who graduated with a degree in health, kinesiology, and leisure studies — has emerged as a leader for the 6-1 Bears, recording 18 tackles, including a career-high six versus Oklahoma State.

**Patrick Paul, a redshirt freshman left tackle for the University of Houston**, suffered an ankle injury in just the second game of the 2020 season, requiring surgery and sidelining him for the remainder of the season. The 6-foot-7, 315-pound native of Houston underwent ankle surgery and as a result he was unable to walk for 10 weeks. After an aggressive rehabilitation he earned his starting left tackle position back in 2021 and through six games, in which he played all 406 snaps, he was tied as the highest rated lineman among the five starters.

Past winners of the Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award have included: **2018** – Antwan Dixon (Kent State), Seth Simmer (Dartmouth), Antonio Wimbush (Carson-Newman); **2019** – Jake Luton (Oregon State), Drew Wilson (Georgia Southern), Octavion Wilson (Salisbury University); **2020** – Jarek Broussard (Colorado), Kenneth Horsey (Kentucky) and Silas Kelly (Coastal Carolina). For a complete list of past honorees and additional details on their remarkable comeback stories, visit [www.Comeback-Player.com](http://www.Comeback-Player.com); follow via Twitter at [@ComebackPlayrFB](https://twitter.com/ComebackPlayrFB) via the hashtag #MayoClinicCPOY; and on Instagram at [@Comeback Player CFB](https://www.instagram.com/Comeback_Player_CFB). Mayo Clinic does not have any role in selecting the nominees or winners of the award.

**About Mayo Clinic:** [Mayo Clinic](http://www.mayoclinic.org) is a nonprofit organization committed to innovation in clinical practice, education and research, and providing compassion, expertise and answers to everyone who needs healing. Visit the [Mayo Clinic News Network](http://www.mayoclinic.org/news) for additional Mayo Clinic news. For information on COVID-19, including Mayo Clinic's Coronavirus Map tracking tool, which has 14-day forecasting on COVID-19 trends, visit the [Mayo Clinic COVID-19 Resource Center](http://www.mayoclinic.org/covid-19).

**About CoSIDA (College Sports Information Directors of America):** CoSIDA was founded in 1957 and is a 3,000+ member national organization comprised of the sports public relations, media relations and communications/information professionals throughout all levels of collegiate athletics in the United States and Canada. The organization is the second oldest management association in intercollegiate athletics. To learn more, visit [cosida.com](http://www.cosida.com).

###

Media Contacts: Doug Drotman ([doug@drotman-pr.com](mailto:doug@drotman-pr.com) or 631-462-1198)  
Doug Vance, CoSIDA ([dougvance@cosida.com](mailto:dougvance@cosida.com) or 785-691-7708)