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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2023 Comeback Player of the Year Award Semifinalists Announced

NEW YORK, NY – College Sports Communicators (formerly CoSIDA) in association with The Associated Press (AP) and the Fiesta Bowl Organization, today announced 15 college football student-athletes as semifinalists for the **2023 Comeback Player of the Year Award**.

Since 2018, the award has recognized college football student-athletes from all divisions of college football for overcoming injury, illness or other circumstances. At the conclusion of each season, in a vote by a panel of college football writers, editors and sports information directors, three college football student-athletes are honored as **Comeback Player of the Year Award** winners at the Vrbo Fiesta Bowl.

Here's a look at the **2023 Comeback Player of the Year Semifinalists** and a brief summary of their remarkable comeback stories.

Blake Corum (Senior, RB, Michigan)

Suffered a knee injury near the end of the 2022 season. Played in 12 games but missed both of Michigan's postseason games. Played in all 12 games this season.

2023 SEASON STATS: 202 carries – 976 yards - 22 TD

Jacob Dobbs (Senior, LB, Holy Cross)

Played 4 games during the 2022 season before suffering season ending injuries to his elbow, tricep, and forearm requiring surgery. This season was named Patriot League Defensive Player of the Year (became first player in school history to win the award twice after winning it in 2021); First Team All-Patriot League; Patriot League record holder for career tackles.

2023 SEASON STATS: 123 tackles, 12 TFL, 6 Sacks, 3 FF, 14 QBH, 13.7 Tackles Per Game

CJ Donaldson (Sophomore, RB, West Virginia)

Suffered a concussion vs Texas last season that he had to be carted off for and missed a few weeks. Then against TCU he had a shoulder injury and an ankle fracture. The ankle fracture required surgery and he missed the remainder of the season.

2023 SEASON STATS: 171 carries -798 yards -11 TD; Scored in 10 of the 12 games

Justin Eboigbe (Senior, DL, Alabama)

Played in four games in 2022 before suffering season ending neck injury and undergoing surgery. Played in all 12 games this season.

2023 SEASON STATS: 56 tackles, 10.5 TFL, 6 sacks

Thomas Fidone II (Sophomore, TE, Nebraska)

Dealt with multiple injuries including an ACL in 2021 and another knee injury before the 2022 season limiting him to just one game during his first two seasons. Played in all 12 games this season.

2023 SEASON STATS: 25 receptions -260 yards - 4 TD

Malachi Fields (Junior, WR, Virginia)

Suffered a broken foot in the first game of the 2022 season forcing him to miss the rest of the season.

2023 SEASON STATS: 58 receptions - 511 yards - 8 TD

Davon Ferguson (Senior, CB, Bowling Green)

He was a force in 2021 before suffering a season-ending lower body injury in the eighth game of the season. He returned in 2022 and suffered another lower body injury in week two that forced him to miss the rest of the season. Named MAC East Defensive Player of the Week after recording five tackles, two interceptions, two PBUs and 1.0 TFL at Buffalo. Named a third-team All-MAC defensive back.

2023 SEASON STATS: 47 tackles, 6.5 TFL, 2.5 sacks, 2 Int

Myles Harden (Junior, CB, South Dakota)

Named a HERO Sports Freshman All-American in 2021 and a Sophomore All-American in 2022. Was the best defensive player in the Missouri Valley Football Conference before sustaining an injury in the sixth game of the 2022 season and didn't return. It marked the second year in a row that an injury kept him from competing in the second half of the season. Forced more turnovers through the first four games of 2022 – six – than all but three FCS players nationally during the regular season. Came back to start all 11 games in 2023, earn first-team all-MVFC honors and lead the Coyotes to a 9-2 record, their highest ranking at the FCS level and the No. 3 national seed in the FCS playoffs. Accepted an invitation to compete in the East-West Shrine Bowl. For his career, he recorded six interceptions, five forced fumbles, four fumble recoveries and 26 passes defended in 27 games.

2023 SEASON STATS: 47 Tackles, 2.5 TFL, 1 INT, 1 FR, 6 BRUPs

Daniel Hishaw Jr. (Sophomore, RB, Kansas)

Played five games in the 2022 season before suffering a season-ending hip injury, his second career season-ending hip injury as he also injured his opposite hip after eight games in 2020 forcing him to miss the 2021 season. Last season, Hishaw led the Jayhawks with 262 rush yards and five touchdowns at the time of his injury. Since the start of the 2022 season, he has scored 14 touchdowns (13 rush, 1 rec.) in 17 games played, while the Jayhawks are 13-4 in games that Hishaw has played in over that span, including 8-4 this season.

2023 SEASON STATS: 116 carries -599 yards -8 TD

Mike Hollins (Senior, RB, Virginia)

In November 2022, he was shot and wounded in the shooting that killed three of his teammates. He underwent multiple surgeries and was in critical condition. He recovered from the bullet wounds in time to play in the 2023 Spring Game. Was named the ACC's Brian Piccolo Award as the league's most courageous player this season.

2023 SEASON STATS: 80 carries – 274 yards - 8 TD

Brett Johnson (DL, University of California Berkeley)

Missed the entire 2021 season suffering a fractured hip in a car accident prior to the season. In 2022, he tore his ACL in training camp and missed the whole season again. Played in the 2023 season opener exactly 1,001 days since the last time he was on the field and went on to start all 12 games.

2023 SEASON STATS: 23 tackles, 0.5 sacks, 0.5 TFL, 1 FR

Devin Leary (Senior, QB, Kentucky)

Played in six games during the 2022 season before suffering a season-ending injury and undergoing surgery to repair a torn pectoral muscle. Transferred from NC State to Kentucky for the 2023 season and started all 12 games helping lead the Wildcats to their school-record eighth consecutive bowl bid.

2023 STATISTICS: 193-343-2,440 yards-23 TD- 10 Int

Christian Mahogany (Senior, OL, Boston College)

Missed the entire 2022 season due to an ACL injury. One of the top offensive linemen in the conference. Twice named ACC Offensive Lineman of the Week; 79.3 PFF Pass Block Grade; zero hits or sacks allowed on 394 drop backs; rushing offense ranks 18th nationally and third in the ACC at 193.5 after ranking last in both a year ago.

Malik Robinson (Senior, LB, Houston)

Missed 2022 with torn pectoral muscle suffered in the second game of the season versus Texas Tech.

2023 SEASON STATS: 81 tackles, 2.5 TFL, 1 INT

Mohamed Toure (Senior, LB, Rutgers)

Missed the entire 2022 season due to suffering a torn ACL. Returned as a team captain and played in all 12 games.

2023 SEASON STATS: 85 tackles, 7.5 TFL, 3.5 Sacks, 1 FF, 1 Int

Previous winners of the **Comeback Player of the Year Award** include: **2022 - Mohamed**

Ibrahim (Minnesota); **Laiatu Latu** (UCLA); **Michael Penix Jr.** (Washington); **2021 – Aidan Hutchinson** (Michigan); **McKenzie Milton** (Florida State); **J.J. Weaver** (Kentucky); **2020 – Jarek Broussard** (Colorado); **Kenneth Horsey** (Kentucky); **Silas Kelly** (Coastal Carolina); **2019 – Jake Luton** (Oregon State); **Drew Wilson** (Georgia Southern); **Octavion Wilson** (Salisbury); **2018 - Antwan Dixon** (Kent State), **Seth Simmer** (Dartmouth); **Antonio Wimbush** (Carson-Newman). For a complete list of past honorees, visit www.Comeback-Player.com.

College Sports Communicators is the premier membership association for all strategic, creative and digital professionals working in intercollegiate athletics across all levels for colleges, universities and conferences across the United States and Canada. CSC provides year-round leadership, community, professional development/education, recognition and advocacy for its more than 4,100 members. Founded in 1957 as the College Sports Information Directors of America, the organization rebranded in 2022 to position itself as a more inclusive organization for communicators in all types of roles and to lead an industry change where strategic and creative professionals are more aligned. CSC's signature work includes the annual CSC Unite convention each June and the administration of the prestigious Academic All-America® program and Hall of Fame. Since 1952, more than 40,000 of the world's most elite student-athletes have been recognized with Academic All-America status in all sports.

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