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JIM THORPE AWARD NAMES 2011 PRESEASON WATCH LIST

Oklahoma City—The **Jim Thorpe Award** 2011 watch list announced today includes 37 of the nation's best defensive backs, representing eight conferences and one independent.

The Thorpe Award, one of the most coveted awards in college football, is celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2011. The Award, established in 1986, is named after history's greatest all-around athlete, Jim Thorpe. Thorpe excelled as a running back, passer and kicker on the offensive side of the ball, but also stood out as a defensive back. In addition to his legendary performance on the football field, Thorpe played professional baseball and won Olympic gold medals in the decathlon and pentathlon.

The **Jim Thorpe Award** watch list is chosen by a screening committee who compile a list of 30-40 players. The list is not final, and players who have outstanding seasons are added as the season progresses. The Thorpe Award Winner is selected from three finalists and will be announced at The Home Depot College Football Awards on December 8, 2011 on ESPN.

The 25th Anniversary Jim Thorpe Award Banquet will be held on Tuesday, February 7, 2012 in Oklahoma City, OK.

The **Jim Thorpe Award** is a member of the National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA). The NCFAA was founded in 1997 as a coalition of the major collegiate football awards to protect, preserve and enhance the integrity, influence and prestige of the game's predominant awards. The NCFAA encourages professionalism and the highest standards for the administration of its member awards and the selection of their candidates and recipients. For more information, visit the association's official website, ncfaa.org.

The members of the NCFAA are unveiling their preseason watch lists over a 13-day period this month. Fifteen of the association's 21 awards select a preseason watch list and this is the first time the NCFAA has spearheaded a coordinated effort to promote each awards preseason candidates. Following is a 2011 preseason watch list calendar:

Tues., July 5: Maxwell Award/Bednarik Award
Wed., July 6: Biletnikoff Award/Mackey Award
Thurs., July 7: Lou Groza Award/Ray Guy Award
Fri., July 8: Bronko Nagurski Trophy/Outland Trophy
Mon., July 11: Jim Thorpe Award

Tues., July 12: Rotary Lombardi Award
Wed., July 13: Rimington Trophy
Thurs., July 14: Butkus Award
Fri., July 15: Davey O'Brien Award/Doak Walker Award
Mon., July 18: Walter Camp Award

2011 Jim Thorpe Award Preseason Watch List

Ray Ray Armstrong, Miami (FL), SS

Mark Barron, Alabama, SS

John Boyett, Oregon, FS

Brandon Boykin, Georgia, CB

Morris Claiborne, LSU, CB

Alfonzo Dennard, Nebraska, CB

Tony Dye, UCLA, CB

Matt Elam, Florida, SS

Antonio Fenelus, Wisconsin, CB

Jamell Fleming, Oklahoma, CB

Donnie Fletcher, Boston College, CB

Blake Gideon, Texas, FS

Stephon Gilmore, South Carolina, CB

Casey Hayward, Vanderbilt, CB

Jayron Hosley, Virginia Tech, CB

Delano Howell, Stanford, SS

Duke Ihenacho, San Jose State, SS

George Iloka, Boise State, FS

Tony Jefferson, Oklahoma, FS

Leonard Johnson, Iowa State, CB

Coryell Judie, Texas A&M, CB

Dre Kirkpatrick, Alabama, CB

Robert Lester, Alabama, FS

Markelle Martin, Oklahoma State, SS

TJ McDonald, USC, FS

Chase Minnifield, Virginia, CB

Marco Nelson, Tulsa, FS

Brian Peters, Northwestern, FS

Greg Reid, Florida State, CB

Xavier Rhodes Florida State, CB

Josh Robinson, UCF, CB

Trenton Robinson, Michigan State, FS

Harrison Smith, Notre Dame, FS

Keith Tandy, West Virginia, CB

Kenny Tate, Maryland, FS

Tramain Thomas, Arkansas, FS

Prentiss Waggner, Tennessee, SS

By Conference: SEC (10); ACC (7); Big 12 (6); Big 10 (4); PAC 12 (4); C-USA (2); WAC (2); Big East (1); Independents (1).

The Jim Thorpe Award is presented to the Best Defensive Back in College Football by the Jim Thorpe Association.