

# THE NATIONAL HARLON HILL AWARD COMMITTEE

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## **HOLD FOR RELEASE**

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### **TWENTY EIGHT CANDIDATES VIE FOR HILL TROPHY AS NCAA DIVISION II FOOTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

FLORENCE - Ala. -- A total of 28 candidates are in the running for the 2013 Harlon Hill Trophy as the NCAA Division II College Football Player of the Year.

The list of candidates was announced Thursday morning by the National Harlon Hill Award Committee.

The list includes seven players from each of the four Division II Super Regions.

Players are nominated and voted on by the sports information directors at the 168 NCAA Division II football-playing institutions. The 28 initial candidates will be placed on regional ballots and the top two players from each of the four NCAA regions will advance to the national ballot when regional voting concludes on November 22.

The winner of the 2013 award, which is presented by the National Harlon Hill Award Committee, will be announced at the 28th annual Harlon Hill Trophy Presentation Banquet on Friday, December 20 at the Florence Conference Center at 6:30 p.m. This year's Hill Trophy Banquet will also include the 15th induction into the Division II Football Hall of Fame.

The 2013 Hall of Fame class includes former Valdosta State University quarterback Dusty Bonner, former Jacksonville State University tight end Keith McKeller and former Indiana University, Pa., head coach Frank Cignetti.

Tickets are \$50 each or \$400 for a table of eight and can be purchased by calling the Shoals Chamber of Commerce at (256) 764-4661.

The NCAA Division II Championship Game is scheduled for December 21 at Florence's Braly Municipal Stadium at noon.

The Hill Trophy is sponsored by the City of Florence, Ala., Florence-Lauderdale Tourism, Opti-Net, the Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa and Herff Jones.

Candidates were initially nominated by the sports information directors at their respective schools and those nominations were then reviewed by the Hill Regional Advisory Committees, which trimmed the list of candidates.

The group of 28 candidates includes 17 quarterbacks, seven running backs, three receivers and a linebacker. There are 20 seniors, five juniors and three sophomores.

Continued . . .

## Hill Add 2 . . .

A total of 13 of the 28 candidates are on teams currently ranked in the NCAA Division II Top 25.

The list of candidates for the 2013 Hill Trophy includes 2012 winner Zach Zulli of Shippensburg University, third-place finisher Franklyn Quiteh of Bloomsburg University and sixth place finisher Kevin Rodgers of Henderson State University.

Among the players vying for the 2013 award from the Super Region 1 are senior quarterback **Nigel Barksdale** of Slippery Rock University (Pa.), senior quarterback **Joe Clancy** of Merrimack College; senior quarterback **D.J. Mendenhall** of Urbana (Ohio) University, senior running back **Franklyn Quiteh** of Bloomsburg (Pa.) University, sophomore quarterback **Matt Soltes** of East Stroudsburg (Pa.) University, senior running back **Rondell White** of West Chester (Pa.) University and senior quarterback **Zach Zulli** of Shippensburg (Pa.) University.

Candidates from Super Regional 2 are senior quarterback **Kyle Caldwell** of the University of West Alabama, senior quarterback **Luke Charles** of the University of North Carolina Pembroke, senior quarterback **Bo Cordell** of Tusculum College (Tenn.), senior wide receiver **Freddie Martino** of North Greenville University, senior quarterback **Robbie Nallenweg** of Wingate University (N.C.), senior quarterback **Chris Rini** of Lane College (Tenn.) and senior linebacker **Tavarius Wilson** of the University of North Alabama.

Super Regional 3 is represented by senior wide receiver **John Brown** of Pittsburg State University (Kan.), junior wide receiver **Marquez Clark** of the University of Central Oklahoma, senior **Phillip Klaphake** of St. Cloud State University (Minn.), junior quarterback **Kevin Rodgers** of Henderson State University (Ark.), junior running back **Chris Smith** of Upper Iowa University, junior running back **Tyler Tonderum** of Southwest Minnesota State University and senior quarterback **Jon Wolf** of Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Selected from Super Regional 4 are junior quarterback **Chris Bonner** of Colorado State University, Pueblo, senior tailback **Glen Clinton** of Chadron State College (Neb.), sophomore running back **Daiquone Ford** of the University of Findlay (Ohio), senior running back **Keidrick Jackson** of Midwestern State University (Texas), senior quarterback **Jonathon Jennings** of Saginaw Valley State University (Mich.), sophomore quarterback **Jason Vander Laan** of Ferris State University (Mich.) and senior quarterback **Dustin Vaughan** of West Texas A&M.

\* \* \*

North Dakota State quarterback Jeff Bentrin won the initial Hill Trophy in 1986, followed by three-time winner - Texas A&I (now Texas A&M-Kingsville) running back Johnny Bailey - in 1987, 1988 and 1989.

Another North Dakota State quarterback, Chris Simdorn, claimed the 1990 award, followed by Pittsburg State receiver Ronnie West in 1991, Pittsburg State running back Ronald Moore in 1992, New Haven running back Roger Graham in 1993, Valdosta State quarterback Chris Hatcher in 1994.

North Alabama linebacker Ronald McKinnon became the first and so far only defensive player to win the award in 1995, followed by Truman State running back Jarrett Anderson in 1996, Bloomsburg University running back Irvin Sigler in 1997, Emporia State running back Brian Shay in 1998 and Northern Colorado quarterback Corte McGuffey in 1999.

The award had its second two-time winner when Valdosta State quarterback Dusty Bonner claimed the Hill Trophy in 2000 and 2001.

Grand Valley State quarterback Curt Anes won the Hill Trophy in 2002, followed by North

Alabama quarterback Will Hall in 2003, Colorado School of Mines quarterback Chad Frieauf in 2004 and East Stroudsburg's Jimmy Terwilliger in 2005. Four straight Hill Trophies were won by running backs, beginning with Chadron State's Danny Woodhead in 2006 and 2007. Abilene Christian's Bernard Scott won in 2008, followed by Wayne State (Mich.) running back Joique Bell in 2009.

Central Missouri quarterback Eric Czerniewski was the 2010 Hill winner, followed by Mars Hill running back Jonas Randolph in 2011 and Zulli in 2012.

## 2013 Harlon Hill Trophy Candidates

<b>SUPER REGIONAL 1</b>	<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Ht</b>	<b>Wt</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Nigel Barksdale	QB	5-10	170	SR	Slippery Rock	San Jacinto, California
Joe Clancy	QB	6-3	210	SR	Merrimack	Newburyport, Massachusetts
D.J. Mendenhall	QB	6-5	230	SR	Urbana	West Jefferson, Ohio
Franklyn Quiteh	RB	5-9	206	SR	Bloomsburg	Tobyhanna, Pennsylvania
Matt Soltes	QB	6-3	210	SO	East Stroudsburg	Vernon, New Jersey
Rondell White	RB	5-10	185	SR	West Chester	West Chester, Pennsylvania
Zach Zulli	QB	6-1	205	SR	Shippensburg	Schwenksville, Pennsylvania

<b>SUPER REGIONAL 2</b>	<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Ht</b>	<b>Wt</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Kyle Caldwell	QB	5-7	165	SR	West Alabama	Dadeville, Alabama
Luke Charles	QB	6-1	215	SR	UNC Pembroke	Murphy, North Carolina
Bo Cordell	QB	6-0	205	SR	Tusculum	Cincinnati, Ohio
Freddie Martino	WR	6-0	195	SR	North Greenville	North, South Carolina
Robbie Nallenweg	QB	6-5	230	SR	Wingate	Asheville, North Carolina
Chris Rini	QB	6-3	185	SR	Lane	Key Largo, Florida
Tavarius Wilson	LB	5-11	235	SR	North Alabama	Jackson, Mississippi

<b>SUPER REGIONAL 3</b>	<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Ht</b>	<b>Wt</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
John Brown	WR	5-11	170	SR	Pittsburg State	Homestead, Florida
Marquez Clark	WR	5-11	90	JR	Central Oklahoma	Texarkana, Texas
Phillip Klaphake	QB	6-1	196	SR	St. Cloud State	Princeton, Minnesota
Kevin Rodgers	QB	6-3	215	JR	Henderson State	Rockwall, Texas
Chris Smith	RB	5-8	190	JR	Upper Iowa	Brown Deer, Wisconsin
Tyler Tonderum	RB	5-10	191	JR	Southwest Minnesota St.	Armstrong, Iowa
Jon Wolf	QB	6-4	230	SR	Minnesota State-Mankato	Oak Forest, Illinois

<b>SUPER REGIONAL 4</b>	<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Ht</b>	<b>Wt</b>	<b>CI</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Chris Bonner	QB	6-7	225	JR	Colorado State-Pueblo	San Diego, California
Glen Clinton	TB	5-10	200	SR	Chadron State	Cody, Wyoming
Daiquone Ford	RB	5-7	190	SO	Findlay	Myrtle Beach, S.C.
Keidrick Jackson	RB	5-9	210	SR	Midwestern State	Arlington, Texas
Jonathon Jennings	QB	6-2	205	SR	Saginaw Valley State	Columbus, Ohio
Jason Vander Laan	QB	6-4	236	SO	Ferris State	Frankfort, Illinois
Dustin Vaughan	QB	6-5	220	SR	West Texas A&M	Corpus Christi, Texas