

THE PONY EXPRESS AWARD

PRESS RELEASE



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The Pony Express Award Announces Mid-Season Watch List *Annual Award Celebrating Best Tandem in College Football to be Presented in December*



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DALLAS, TX (Oct. 15, 2026) – The Pony Express Award announced today its mid-season watch list for 2026, a regular season award that honors the best tandem in college football, regardless of position. Craig James and Eric Dickerson – former teammates at SMU and proud members of various Halls of Fame from high school to the NFL – created the award to celebrate selflessness, collaboration, and true team excellence.

"Eric and I have always been about team success over individual success," said James. "It's how we were coached from a young age through high school, as SMU teammates and eventually the NFL. A 'we' honor in a 'me' era, The Pony Express Award is presented annually to the most dynamic and selfless tandem in college football. While on-field performance certainly matters, this recognition is rooted in an unshakable team-first mindset."

Added Dickerson, "The Pony Express Award is about the players who set the tone of their team's culture. There are some really good duos who have stepped up in the first half of the season. We can't wait to see who sets themselves apart."

Whether it's a QB and WR with undeniable chemistry, two offensive linemen paving the way down the field, or a linebacker-safety combo relentlessly anchoring the defense (or other duo/combinations), the award looks for tandems who embody the spirit of The Pony Express

Award. James' and Dickerson's shared faith as brothers-in-Christ has been the foundation of their near 50-year relationship.

The final award winners are not necessarily limited to this mid-season watch list, as new candidates continually present themselves as the season continues.

The Pony Express Award winners will be announced in December.

2026 The Pony Express Award Watch List

All selections are listed alphabetically by university, without rankings.

	(DB) NOAH FIFITA	(WR) ISAIAH MIZELL		(DB) C-J CARR	(WR) JORDAN FAISON
	(S) LEE MOLETTE III	(DB) JAV'VION COLE		(DB) JULIAN SAYIN	(WR) JEREMIAH SMITH
	(DB) MADDUX MADSEN	(RB) DYLAN RILEY		(DB) PEYTON BOWEN	(DB) COURTLAND GUILLORY
	(DB) BEAR BACHMEIER	(WR) LEGEND GLASKER		(DB) DREW MESTEMAKER	(WR) WVATT YOUNG
	(DB) BEAR BACHMEIER	(RB) LJ MARTIN		(DB) TRINIDAD CHAMBLISS	(RB) KEWAN LACY
	(OL) EVAN TENGESDAHL	(OL) TARAN TYO		(DB) BRADEN ATKINSON	(WR) JESSE LEGREE
	(DB) ELLIS ROBINSON IV	(S) K-J BOLDEN		(DB) KEVIN JENNINGS	(WR) YAMIR KNIGHT
	(DB) GUNNER STOCKTON	(RB) DWIGHT PHILLIPS JR.		(DB) LANORRIS SELLERS	(DB) DYLAN STEWART
	(DB) CONNER WEIGMAN	(TE) PATRICK OVERMYER		(DB) ARCH MANNING	(WR) CAM COLEMAN
	(DB) JOSH HOOVER	(WR) NICK MARSH		(LB) HASHEEM BILES	(EDGE) COLIN SIMMONS
	(DB) DARIAN MENSAH	(WR) MALACHI TONEY		(RB) CAMERON DICKEY	(RB) J'KOBY WILLIAMS
	(S) TAVIAN COMBS	(LB) JAXTON ECK		(DB) DEVON DAMPIER	(RB) WAYSHAWN PARKER
	(DB) C-J CARR	(DB) LEONARD MOORE		(DB) DEVON DAMPIER	(WR) BRADEN PEGAN

Video Campaign

The Pony Express Award has also launched a campaign on its [YouTube](#), [X](#) and [Instagram](#) platforms to communicate the value of teamwork in college football and life. The series of short videos features Big 12 players, coaches, and others providing insight into topics like building team bonds in the portal era and collaboration within position groups. Stories will include the clever way Cincinnati shouted out to the bond their offensive linemen share, the poignant way Arizona State recognizes its leadership council, and the Arizona offensive tackle whose teammates marveled at his determination to play through pain for the good of the team.

The PEA will continue to post videos from the campaign throughout the college football season.

– ThePonyExpressAward –

MEDIA CONTACT

Rob Scichili, Tony Fay PR | 214.663.3734 | rob@tonyfaypr.com

Courtney Frappier, Tony Fay PR | 214.505.5173 | courtney@tonyfaypr.com

Tony Fay PR | 1 | Dallas, TX 75074 US

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