

# 2025 Preseason Jet Award Trophy Players to Watch

*Preseason Watchlist Announced for the 15th Annual Jet Award, Recognizing College Football's Top Return Specialist*

OMAHA, NE, UNITED STATES, August 1, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Jet Award Foundation is pleased to announce the preseason watchlist for the Jet Award Sponsored by KRT Muscle Cream, which honors the most outstanding return specialist in college football. Now in its 15th year, the Jet Award continues to celebrate the electrifying talents of players who excel on punt and kickoff returns.



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These players on the preseason watchlist demonstrate the impact a single explosive play can have on a game, and that's what the Jet Award celebrates.”

*Johnny Rodgers*

The award, named in honor of Heisman Trophy winner and College Football Hall of Famer Johnny "The Jet" Rodgers, will culminate with the presentation at the Jet Award Gala on April 2, 2026 at Steelhouse Omaha. Last year's recipient, Kaden Wetjen from Iowa, epitomized the skill and impact recognized by the Jet Award.

The preseason watchlist features standout players from across the nation who have demonstrated exceptional abilities in the return game. The winner of the 2025 Jet Award will be selected by a distinguished panel of voters

including media members from the [Football Writers Association of America](#) (FWAA), former winners of the Jet Award, and two of our founders Johnny Rodgers and William Reed.

"This year's preseason watchlist is stacked with game-breaking talent, get ready to witness some electrifying returns." said Johnny Rodgers, co-founder of the Jet Award Foundation.

For more information about the Jet Award and the 2025 Gala visit [Thejetaward.com](#). Sponsored by [KRTrelief.com](#)

About the Jet Award Foundation: The Jet Award Foundation raises money to provide scholarships to students majoring in the trades at Metro Community College and Iowa Western Community College. Since 2017 more than 500 students have received aid.

The complete 16-man Jet Award preseason watch list follows:

Zachariah Branch, Georgia, WR,  
(Transferred from USC), 2023 Jet Award Winner

Mel Brown, UConn, RB, 17 KOR 495  
Yards, 29.1 Avg, TD

Chris Culliver, UNC, WR, 5 KORs for 242  
yards 48.4 per 2TDs

Dylan Edwards, Kansas State, RB, All-  
Big 12 Honorable Mention as a returner, fifth in the Big 12 in total punt return yards and eighth in kickoff return yards

Ian Foster, Marshall, CB, 2024 All-SBC First Team Return Specialist, led FBS in 50+-yard KO returns (3) and 40+-yard kickoff returns (5)

Kenny Johnson/Pittsburgh, WR, Avg 20.9 yards per kickoff return (22 for 459 yards) and 6.5 per punt return (10 for 65 yard) Led the ACC with a combined 524 kick return yards

Tyler King, New Mexico State, WR, (transferred from Wyoming) 1st Team All- Mountain West Returner

Parker Kingston, BYU, WR, 16 Punt returns 236 yards 14.8 Avg 2 TDs

Keelan Marion Miami, WR, 2024 Semifinalist at BYU

Jeremiah Patterson, Arizona, WR, Lead Arizona and the Big 12 with 596 return yards on special teams

Koi Perich, Minnesota, DB, as a freshman, returned 20 punts for 188 yards and 16 kickoffs for



314 yards

Rayshawn Pleasant, Auburn, CB, (transferred from Tulane), 13 KORs 449 Yards 34.5 Per 2TDs

Henry Rutledge, Charlotte, RB, set school records for longest punt return, punt return yards in a game, punt return yards in a season, and punt and kick return yard single-season average

Kam Shanks, Arkansas, WR, 2024 Semifinalist, (transferred from UAB), Led the nation in punt return yards (329), punt return average (20.6) and punt return touchdowns.

Zavion Thomas, LSU, WR, Led the SEC with 24 returns for 633 yards and 26.4 per 1TD

Kaden Wetjen, Iowa, WR, 2024 Jet Award Winner, Led all CFB in total Kick return yards

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