

2025 Jet Award Winner

Kaden Wetjen Named 2025 Jet Award Winner

Iowa standout becomes first two-time recipient of nation's premier return specialist honor

OMAHA, NE, UNITED STATES, January 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Jet Award Foundation](#) is proud to announce that Kaden Wetjen, return specialist from the University of Iowa, has been named the 2025 Jet Award winner, recognizing the most outstanding return specialist in college football. Wetjen makes history as the first two-time winner of the award.

Wetjen delivered one of the most dominant return seasons in college football history, leading the nation in total punt and kickoff return yards while consistently changing field position and momentum for the Hawkeyes. In 2025 Wetjen returned 21 punt returns for 563 yards and 16 kickoffs for 476 yards. His four special teams returns for touchdowns also led FBS

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Kaden is special. He's a threat every time he touches the ball, and winning the Jet Award twice is truly historic. He's more than deserving, and I'm proud to congratulate him as a two-time winner.”

Johnny Rodgers

No. 2 nationally in kickoff return average (29.8)



In his career he returned 52 punts for 929 yards (17.9 yards per return) and four touchdowns, along with 54 kickoff returns for 1,489 yards (27.6 yards per return) and two touchdowns.

His performance has set and reinforced historic benchmarks:

No. 1 nationally in punt return average (26.8)

His 929 total career punt return yards ranks 10th in Big Ten history

Six career return touchdowns (four punts, two kickoffs), a University of Iowa record

Only player in Iowa program history to score a rushing, receiving, kickoff return, and punt return touchdown in the same season

Wetjen's explosiveness, vision, and consistency made him a constant threat any time the ball was in his hands and solidified his place among the elite return specialists the game has ever seen.

The Jet Award is named in honor of Heisman Trophy winner Johnny Rodgers, one of the greatest return men in college football history.

Proceeds from the Jet Award Gala go towards the Johnny Rodgers Career and Technical Scholarship which has provided aid to more than 500 [Metropolitan Community College](#) students since 2017.

Voting is conducted by members of the [Football Writers Association of America](#) (FWAA), former Jet Award winners, and award co-founders Johnny Rodgers and Coach William Reed.

Past recipients of the Jet Award include Christian McCaffrey, Tyler Lockett, Marcus Jones, and Zachariah Branch, placing Wetjen among an elite group of players who have defined excellence in the return game.

With his historic accomplishments and unprecedeted second Jet Award, Kaden Wetjen has firmly established himself as one of the most dynamic and impactful return specialists in college football history.

Mike'l Severe



Iowa Football



JR Career and Technical Scholarship

The Jet Award Foundation

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