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AMERICAN FOOTBALL COACHES ASSOCIATION

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CARNEGIE MELLON'S SAM BENDER AND LINFIELD'S ALEX HOFF HEADLINE THE 2015 AFCA DIVISION III COACHES' ALL-AMERICA TEAM

WACO, TEX. — Carnegie Mellon running back Sam Benger and Linfield defensive lineman Alex Hoff headline the 2015 AFCA Division III Coaches' All-America Team announced today by the American Football Coaches Association.

The AFCA has selected an All-America team since 1945 and currently selects teams in all five of its divisions. What makes these teams so special is that they are the only ones chosen exclusively by the men who know the players the best — the coaches themselves.

Benger finished the season as the No. 1 rusher in Division III with 2,092 yards, and finished No. 4 in all-purpose yards at 202.64 per game. He added 22 rushing touchdowns, which broke the school's single season mark, and also set a school record with 303 yards rushing against Washington & Jefferson earlier in the season. Hoff, who was the Northwest Conference Defensive Player of the Year, earned his second straight AFCA All-America honor in 2015 by recording 12.5 sacks, which ranked him No. 16 in the nation, and 22 tackles for loss, which ranked him 15th, this season.

2015 AFCA Division III Coaches' All-America Team

Offense

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	School	Coach	Hometown (High School)
QB	Joe Callahan	6-1	215	Sr.	Wesley (Del.)	Mike Drass	Absecon, N.J. (Holy Spirit)
RB	Sam Benger	5-8	185	So.	Carnegie Mellon (Pa.)	Rich Lackner	Hingham, Mass. (Hingham)
RB	Dayton Winn	5-10	155	Jr.	Hendrix (Ark.)	Buck Buchanan	Pea Ridge, Ark. (Pea Ridge)
WR	Kevin Jennings	6-2	193	Sr.	Carroll (Wis.)	Mark Krzykowski	Donnellson, Iowa (Keokuk)
WR	Jessie Ramos	5-10	170	Sr.	Hardin-Simmons (Texas)	Jesse Burleson	Stamford, Texas (Stamford)
TE	Joe Sommers	6-3	240	Sr.	Wis.-Oshkosh	Pat Cerroni	Hortonville, Wis. (Hortonville)
OL	David Simmet	6-9	350	Sr.	St. Thomas (Minn.)	Glenn Caruso	Stillwater, Minn. (Hill-Murray)
OL	Michael LaSala	6-3	260	Jr.	Washington & Lee (Va.)	Scott Abell	Wilton, Conn. (Wilton)
OL	Colin Egan	6-4	310	Sr.	Johns Hopkins (Md.)	Jim Margraff	Chadds Ford, Pa. (Bishop Shanahan)
OL	Eric Knaperek	6-2	282	Sr.	North Central (Ill.)	Jeff Thorne	Mokena, Ill. (Lincoln-Way North)
OL	Sam Hart	6-5	298	Sr.	Amherst (Mass.)	E.J. Mills	Amherst, Mass. (Wilbraham & Monson Academy)

Defense

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	School	Coach	Hometown (High School)
DL	Chyron Brown-Wallace	6-0	280	Jr.	St. Lawrence (N.Y.)	Mark Raymond	Rochester, N.Y. (Eastridge)
DL	Tyler McCullen	6-5	265	Sr.	Wabash (Ind.)	Erik Raeburn	Apache Junction, Ariz. (Apache Junction)
DL	Tom Lally	6-2	260	Sr.	Mount Union (Ohio)	Vince Kehres	Fairview Park, Ohio (Lakewood St. Edward)
DL	*Alex Hoff	6-3	240	Sr.	Linfield (Ore.)	Joseph Smith	Lebanon, Ore. (Lebanon)
LB	Adam Dansdill	6-0	217	Sr.	Wheaton (Ill.)	Mike Swider	Wheaton, Ill. (Wheaton-Warrenville South)
LB	*Max Nacewicz	6-2	255	Sr.	Springfield (Mass.)	Mike DeLong	Sandy Hook, Conn. (Newton)
LB	Justin Dischler	6-0	230	Sr.	Wis.-Whitewater	Kevin Bulls	Milwaukee, Wis. (Pius XI)
DB	Frank Laterza	6-0	190	Sr.	St. Norbert (Wis.)	Dan McCarty	Barrington Hills, Ill. (St. Viator)
DB	Philip Lanieri, III	6-0	195	Sr.	Rensselaer (N.Y.)	Ralph Isernia	Port Jefferson, N.Y. (Earl L. Vandermeulen)
DB	Jarrett Lecas	5-11	175	Jr.	Benedictine (Ill.)	Jon Cooper	Frankfort, Ill. (Lincoln Way East)
DB	Ryan Williams	6-1	180	Jr.	McMurry (Texas)	Lance Hinson	Corinth, Texas (Guyer)

Specialists

Pos	Name	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	School	Coach	Hometown (High School)
PK	Thomas Woodburn	5-11	174	Sr.	Utica (N.Y.)	Blaise Faggiano	West Islip, N.Y. (West Islip)
P	Ryan Anderson	6-3	205	So.	Olivet (Mich.)	Dan Pifer	DeWitt, Mich. (DeWitt)
AP	Marshall Howell	6-1	195	Jr.	John Carroll (Ohio)	Tom Arth	Cleveland, Ohio (Benedictine)

*-2014 AFCA All-American

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Team Background: The AFCA has selected an All-America team every year since 1945. The five teams now chosen for each AFCA division evolved from a single 11-player squad in 1945. From 1945 until 1967, only one team was chosen.

From 1967 through 1971, two teams, University Division and College Division, were selected. In 1972, the College Division was split into College I and College II.

In 1979, the University Division was split into two teams — Division I-A and Division I-AA.

In 1996, the College I and College II teams were renamed Division II and Division III, respectively. The AFCA began selecting an NAIA-only team in 2006. Also in 2006, the Division I-A and Division I-AA teams were renamed Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) and Football Championship Subdivision (FCS), respectively.

From 1965-81, a 22-player (11 offensive, 11 defensive) team was chosen. In 1982, a punter and placekicker were added to the team. In 1997, a return specialist was added, giving us the current 25-player team. The return specialist position was replaced by an all-purpose player in 2006.

Selection Process: The AFCA's Division III All-America Selection Committee is made up of three head coaches from each of the AFCA's eight districts, one of whom serves as a district chairman, along with another head coach who serves as the chairman of the selection committee. The coaches in each district are responsible for ranking the top players in their respective districts prior to a conference call between the district chairmen and the committee chairman on which the team is chosen.

The Award: Members of the AFCA Coaches' All-America Team receive a plaque commemorating their selection to the team.

Top Teams: Mount Union has been represented a total of 24 times by 22 players on the AFCA Division III Coaches' All-America Team since 1972. The Purple Raiders are followed by Augustana (Ill.) (19/17), Wittenberg (19/17), Linfield (18/16), Washington & Jefferson (18/16), Wisconsin-La Crosse (17/17), Central (Iowa) (15/14), Montclair State (15/13), Wisconsin-Whitewater (15/13), Wesley (15/12), Springfield (14/12), Wheaton (14/13), Emory & Henry (13/13), Ithaca (13/13), Mary Hardin-Baylor (13/11), Widener (13/10), Salisbury (12/12), Frostburg State (11/10), St. John's (Minn.) (11/11), Wabash (11/11) and John Carroll (10/10).

Consecutive Years: With Joe Callahan's selection, Wesley has had a player chosen for 11 consecutive years, from 2005 to present, the longest current streak. Mount Union had a player chosen for 10 consecutive years, from 2000-09, which is the second longest streak. Tied for third on the list are Washington & Jefferson, who had a player chosen for All-America honors for nine straight seasons (2002-10), and Mary Hardin-Baylor, who had a player chosen for All-America from 2006 to 2014. Emory & Henry is fourth on the list, having had a player named AFCA All-American for eight straight seasons from 1985-1992. Augustana (Ill.) and Wheaton have had players selected for six consecutive seasons from 2000-05 and 2003-08, respectively.

Repeat After Me: No player has earned AFCA Division III All-America honors four times, however Texas A&I (now Texas A&M-Kingsville) running back Johnny Bailey did earn Coaches' All-America honors four straight years (1986-87-88-89) in AFCA College Division I (now AFCA Division II).

Five players have earned AFCA Division III Coaches' All-America Team honors three times. They are: DB Tom Deery, Widener, 1979-80-81; RB Scott Reppert, Lawrence, 1980-81-82; RB Joe Dudek, Plymouth State, 1983-84-85; DL Sean Brewer, Millsaps, 1990-91-92; and P Jeff Shea, California Lutheran, 1995-96-97.

Class Distinction: This year's AFCA Division III Coaches' All-America Team is made up of 17 seniors, six juniors and two sophomores.

First Time School: Running back Dayton Winn of Hendrix, defensive lineman Chyron Brown-Wallace of St. Lawrence and placekicker Thomas Woodburn of Utica (N.Y.) all earned All-America honors for their schools for the first time.

Back-to-Back: Linfield defensive lineman Alex Hoff and Springfield linebacker Max Nacewicz earned AFCA Division III Coaches' All-America honors for a second consecutive season in 2015.

It's Been A While: Wide receiver Kevin Jennings of Carroll (Wis.), defensive back Ryan Williams of McMurry (Texas) and offensive lineman Sam Hart of Amherst have earned AFCA Coaches' All-America Team honors for their schools for the first time since 1974, 1980 and 1997, respectively.

Two Players, Two Schools: Punter Mark Bounds and placekicker Greg Zuerlein are the only players to earn Coaches' All-America honors at two different schools. Bounds was named to the AFCA College Division I team in 1990 while playing for West Texas A&M. He transferred to Texas Tech after West Texas dropped football and earned I-A All-America honors as a Red Raider in 1991. Zuerlein was named to the Division II Coaches' All-America Team in 2009 while playing for Nebraska-Omaha. He transferred to Missouri Western State after Nebraska-Omaha dropped its football program and earned Division II honors in 2011 as a Griffon.

For more information on the AFCA and its programs log on to the AFCA's website at www.afca.com.