



Finalists Announced for 2025 Pony Express Award Honoring College Football's Most Outstanding Tandem

Award Winners Recognizing the Power of Partnership to be Announced on December 9

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DALLAS (December 2, 2025) - The Pony Express Huddle Foundation today proudly announced the finalists for the 2025 Pony Express Award, the only collegiate football accolade honoring the most outstanding teammate tandems, regardless of position. The award celebrates duos whose collective leadership, sacrifice, and impact shape team success, underscoring the belief that great players can be even greater together, both on and off the field. The winning tandem of the 2025 Pony Express Award will be revealed on December 9, 2025.

The four finalist tandems for the 2025 Pony Express Award are:

- **CJ Allen, LB and Raylen Wilson, LB - Georgia**
Through their talent, toughness and trust in one another, Allen and Wilson represent the heart of the Bulldogs' defensive identity that led to an appearance in the SEC Championship Game. Allen leads the team with 80 tackles, 3.5 sacks and 2 forced fumbles. Wilson has accounted for 65 tackles and 2.5 sacks.
- **Jeremiyah Love, RB and Jadarian Price, RB - Notre Dame**
Nicknamed the "dynamic duo," Love and Price are known for their explosive play, tight bond and unified approach in elevating the Fighting Irish's offensive attack. The two have combined for more than 2,000 yards of offense, with Love leading the team with 1,372 yards rushing and 18 rushing TDs, while Price has added 674 yards rushing and 11 rushing TDs.
- **Julian Sayin, QB and Jeremiah Smith, WR - Ohio State**
Sayin and Smith have emerged as one of college football's most thrilling combinations, delivering highlight-reel moments while leading the Buckeyes offense. Sayin has thrown for 3,065 yards with 30 touchdowns and only 5 interceptions this season. Smith is Sayin's primary target with 72 receptions for 942 yards and 11 touchdowns.
- **Jacob Rodriguez, LB and David Bailey, LB - Texas Tech**
Rodriguez and Bailey are two high-impact players at the center of the Red Raiders' formidable defensive unit, delivering big plays on the field and community engagement off the field that reflect the values of the Pony Express Award. Rodriguez leads Texas Tech with 101 tackles, 1 sack, 4 interceptions and 7 forced fumbles. Bailey leads the team with 12.5 sacks, while adding 37 tackles and 2 forced fumbles.

Established to honor the legacy of SMU running backs Eric Dickerson and Craig James, known as the "Pony Express" when they played together from 1979 to 1982, this award pays tribute to college football's greatest tandems. Dickerson and James led the Mustangs to Southwest Conference Championships in 1981 and 1982, setting a standard for collaboration and excellence during their tenure at SMU. Unlike other awards that focus on individual achievements, the Pony Express Award emphasizes the significance of partnership and collective success in football.

"Football is the ultimate team sport, and the synergy between teammates elevates a team's performance to extraordinary levels," said Dickerson. "The Pony Express Award spotlights those

outstanding duos whose combined efforts make a significant impact on their team and the sport."

"During our time on the Hilltop, Eric and I experienced firsthand how powerful a strong partnership can be on and off the field," said James. "We are honored that our legacy at SMU encourages current players to cultivate teamwork and unity."

Adding to its uniqueness among college football honors, the Pony Express Award is determined by a pool of current college football players, emphasizing peer recognition in celebrating collaborative excellence. Last year, the Pony Express Award was presented to University of Colorado teammates Shedeur Sanders and Travis Hunter, recognizing their remarkable collaboration and contributions throughout the 2024 season.

For more information about the Pony Express Award and the Pony Express Huddle Foundation, please visit theponyexpressaward.com.

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About the Pony Express Award

Presented by the Pony Express Huddle Foundation, the Pony Express Award is given to, and determined by, college football players, honoring college football's outstanding tandem, regardless of position. While most college football awards honor individual players, this award focuses on teamwork, since football is, at its core, a team game. The Pony Express Award pays tribute to teammates who often sacrifice individual honor for team success, uplifting others on the field, off the field, and in life.



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