



## NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS ASSOCIATION

(June 8, 2018)

[ncbwa.com](http://ncbwa.com)

### *NCBWA ANNOUNCES 2018 DISTRICT PLAYERS OF THE YEAR*

**DALLAS** – For the 18th consecutive year, the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association announced its 2018 District Players of the Year on Friday.

The 2018 NCBWA District Players of the Year are District 1: OF Ryan Ward (Bryant); District 2: SS Greg Cullen (Niagara); District 3: SP Casey Mize (Auburn) and SP Brady Singer (Florida); District 4: C Joey Bart (Georgia Tech); District 5: 1B Bren Spillane (Illinois); District 6: OF Steele Walker (Oklahoma); District 7: 2B Kody Clemens (Texas); District 8: 1B Nic Ready (Air Force); District 9: RP Jack Little (Stanford) and 1B Andrew Vaughn (California).

On Thursday, Bart, Clemens, Mize, Singer and Spillane were named finalists for the 2018 Dick Howser Trophy, presented by The Game Headwear.

Some of the previous NCBWA District Players of the Year have been Howser Trophy recipients, such as Mark Teixeira of Georgia Tech, Mark Prior of USC, Khalil Greene of Clemson, Rickie Weeks of Southern, Jered Weaver of Long Beach State, Alex Gordon of Nebraska, Brad Lincoln of Houston, David Price of Vanderbilt, Buster Posey of Florida State, Stephen Strasburg of San Diego State, Taylor Jungmann of Texas, Mike Zunino of Florida, Kris Bryant of San Diego, AJ Reed of Kentucky, Arkansas' Andrew Benintendi and Louisville's Brendan McKay.

As a redshirt freshman who hails from Milbury, Massachusetts, Ward put together one of the best seasons in Bryant history. An outfielder, he was named Collegiate Baseball Freshman-of-the-Year as well as the ECAC Rookie-of-the-Year after hitting .409 and slugging .636. He belted 22 doubles and added five triples and eight home runs, while scoring 51 runs and knocking in 52. Ward set a program record with a 30-game hitting streak and reached base safely in 40 consecutive games. He struck out just 10 times.

A shortstop from Niagara, Cullen was selected in the 15th round of the MLB Draft. He led the Purple Eagles with an impressive .458 batting average while reaching base at a 55.6 percent clip. The Penfield, N.Y. native, was named the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Player-of-the-Year and became the fourth player in the program's history to earn the honor. Cullen was named Second-Team All-America by Collegiate Baseball.

Mize, a finalist for the Dick Howser Trophy and a first-team All-Southeastern Conference honoree, was the first overall pick by the Detroit Tigers after posting a 10-5 record and posting a 2.95 earned run average. He has struck out 151 batters in 109.2 innings, while helping the Tigers to the Super Regionals against top-seed Florida. Mize was named a finalist for the Golden Spikes Award, was a first-team All-America selection by Baseball America, while Collegiate Baseball slotted him on its second team.

His 151 strikeouts not only lead the SEC and rank second in the country, but are also tied for the third most in a single-season in program history. Dating back to the beginning of last season, the Springville, Alabama, native has struck out 260 batters and issued only 21 walks. Along with his strikeout total, Mize also leads the SEC in strikeout-to-walk ratio (12.58), strikeouts per nine innings (12.39) and WHIP (0.81). His strikeout-to-walk ratio and WHIP are good for second and third in the country, respectively.

Mize has turned in a quality start in 10 of his 16 trips to the mound and has gone the distance in three games this season. He took the mound on March 9 vs. Northeastern and turned in the ninth no-hitter in program history while totaling 13 strikeouts without issuing a walk. The 13-strikeout performance against the Huskies was one of six outings with 10 or more strikeouts this season, including a record-matching 15 strikeouts vs. Vanderbilt on May 4. Mize joined former Auburn pitchers Mark Chapman, John Powell, Tim Hudson and Chris Bootcheck in the 15-strikeout club and was the first SEC pitcher to accomplish the feat in a conference game since 2012.

Singer, a finalist for the Dick Howser Trophy, was the SEC Pitcher-of-the-Year and a first-round selection of Kansas City, earning first-team All-America honors from Baseball America and Collegiate Baseball. Baseball America's National Player of the Year led a talented Florida staff with an 11-1 record in 14 starts, while fashioning a 2.27 ERA and holding opponents to a .188 batting average. The Eustis, Florida native finished with seven or more strikeouts in eight games, had a season-high 11 strikeouts against Vanderbilt and also had 10 strikeouts against Kentucky.

His 10 SEC wins led the conference in the regular season and helped him earn First Team All-SEC honors. Other career awards included 2017 All-SEC Second Team, College World Series All-Tournament Team and Academic All-SEC.

His career numbers to date are equally as impressive with a career record of 21-8, ERA of 3.18 and 265 career strikeouts in 264.2 innings pitched. His 265 career strikeouts ranks seventh all-time at Florida.

Bart, a finalist for the Dick Howser Trophy and was the second overall pick in the MLB draft earlier this week, was named a finalist for the Johnny Bench Award for the nation's outstanding collegiate catcher. He also was named the Atlantic Coast Conference Player-of-the-Year after hitting .359 with a team-high 16 home runs and drove in 38 runs. A junior, Bart also was tabbed by the ACC as the league's Defensive Player-of-the-Year and was a first-team All-ACC selection. He has been named to both the Baseball America and Collegiate Baseball All-America squads.

The Buford, Georgia native led the ACC in hitting and was second in slugging percentage (.632) and hits (79), and was in the top 10 in home runs, runs scored and on-base percentage (.471). He posted a season-high 16-game hitting streak, the longest of the year for a Yellow Jacket player, and totaled 24 multi-hit games on the season overall, which included a pair of multi-home run games in which he blasted two long balls at Mercer on April 10 and on the road at Virginia on May 14. A solid defensive catcher, Bart posted a .992 fielding percentage on the season, threw out 12-of-33 would-be base stealers and recorded three pickoffs from behind the plate.

A finalist for the Dick Howser Trophy, Spillane posted a strong season at the plate, hitting .389 with 17 doubles and 23 home runs, while slugging a NCAA-leading .903. He was named Big Ten Player of the Year, Collegiate Baseball's National Player-of-the-Year and Baseball America listed the junior on its first-team All-America squad. Spillane was honored as the Big 10's Player-of-the-Year and selected by Cincinnati in the third round of the MLB Draft.

He is the first player in program history to win a national player of the year award and the first Big Ten player drafted in 2018. Spillane was the first player in Division I to slug over .900 in a season since 2009. The Wheeling, Illinois native's rare combo of speed and power helped him become the first player in Illini history to have 15 homers and 15 steals in a single season.

Oklahoma's Walker is a first draftee after he was picked by the Chicago White Sox in the second round. He led the Sooners with a .352 batting average, while hitting a team-leading 13 home runs. The Prosper, Texas native added 14 doubles and knocked in 53 runs. The junior outfielder was named All-Big 12 First-Team for the second straight season. Baseball American slotted him on their All-America second team. A semifinalist for the Golden Spikes Award, he ranked first on the team with a .441 on-base percentage and .606 slugging percentage.

Clemens, a finalist for the Dick Howser Trophy and who led the Longhorns to their first Big 12 conference title since 2011, spurred Texas to the Super Regional round as a junior, hitting a team-high .346 with 21 home runs and driving in 68 runs. The Houston native was selected by Detroit in the third round of the MLB Draft and was honored as the Big 12 Player-of-the-Year and named to Baseball America and Collegiate Baseball's All-America teams. A Golden Spikes Award finalist, Clemens defensively has been a stalwart at second base, helping turn 68 double plays, which ranks third in the nation.

Ready, who recently earned First-Team All-Mountain West Baseball honors, is coming off a banner junior season where he led the conference with 20 home runs and 74 RBI. Both totals rank second all-time in a season at Air Force. The Dallas, Texas, native batted .341 on the season. He also led the conference with 12 home runs and 42 RBI in conference play, both of which are school MW season records. Ready also had a team-best 30 game hitting streak and 38-game reached base streak. The junior ranked first in the MW in seven categories overall and in conference play. He is a three-time All-MW selection, the 2016 MW co-Freshman of the Year, a 2016 Freshman All-American and 2018 Preseason All-American.

Little of Stanford, a sophomore from Las Vegas, Nevada, is a finalist for the NCBWA Stopper of the Year Award. He earned Baseball America All-America first-team honors and Collegiate Baseball second-team distinction. The righthander keyed the Cardinal bullpen with 15 saves, ranking third in the nation. Over the course of 25 appearances, covering 45.1 innings, Little struck out 58 batters, while issuing just eight walks and limiting opponents to a .167 batting average. He also was named to the Pac-12's All-Conference squad.

A finalist for the Golden Spikes Award, California's Vaughn was another Baseball America First-Team All-American selection from the Pac-12. He also was a Collegiate Baseball second-team All-America selection and was named to the Pac-12 All-Conference first team. The Santa Rosa, California native was the Pac-12 Player-of-the-Year, won the league's batting average race with a .402 average, added 23 home runs and drove in 63 runs to top the Bear lineup as a sophomore.

His batting average ranked third in Cal single-season history. His home run total tied the single-season record set by Xavier Nady in 1999 and his slugging percentage of .819 is the best in school history. He walked 44 times, got hit by a pitch 12 times and struck out only 18 times. His on-base percentage of .531 ranks fourth in the nation. Vaughn was also one of the conference's best defenders at his position, compiling a fielding percentage of .992 and earning a spot on the Pac-12 All-Defensive team.

Founded in 1962, the NCBWA is dedicated to the advancement of college baseball. Membership is open to writers, broadcasters and publicists of the sport. For more information about the NCBWA, visit the association's official Web site, [www.ncbwa.com](http://www.ncbwa.com). For more information, contact NCBWA Executive Assistant Director Mike Montoro (304-293-2821), [mike.montoro@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:mike.montoro@mail.wvu.edu).

**Stats through games of June 4, 2018:**

<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Name, School</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Avg.</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>AB</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>2B</b>	<b>3B</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>RBI</b>	<b>BB</b>	<b>SO</b>	<b>SB</b>
OF	Ryan Ward, Bryant	r-Fr.	.409	56	247	51	101	22	5	8	52	21	10	9-12
SS	Greg Cullen, Niagara	Jr.	.458	49	177	51	81	17	3	4	42	38	22	13-15
C	Joey Bart, Georgia Tech	Jr.	.359	57	220	55	79	12	0	16	38	41	56	3-3
1B	Bren Spillane, Illinois	Jr.	.389	50	175	75	68	17	2	23	60	36	57	16-24
OF	Steele Walker, Oklahoma	Jr.	.352	54	216	48	76	14	1	13	53	31	48	7-10
2B	Kody Clemens, Texas	Jr.	.346	60	231	55	80	14	3	21	68	35	46	5-7
1B	Nic Ready, Air Force	Jr.	.341	53	229	56	78	18	2	20	74	22	62	6-7
1B	Andrew Vaughn, California	So.	.402	54	199	59	80	14	0	23	63	44	18	4-8

<b>Pos.</b>	<b>Name School</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>W-L</b>	<b>ERA</b>	<b>APP</b>	<b>GS</b>	<b>CG</b>	<b>SHO</b>	<b>SV</b>	<b>IP</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>ER</b>	<b>BB</b>	<b>SO</b>	<b>OPP BA</b>
SP	Casey Mize, Auburn	Jr.	10-5	2.95	16	16	3	1/1	0	109.2	77	37	36	12	151	.195
SP	Brady Singer, Florida	Jr.	11-1	2.27	14	14	1	1/1	0	95.0	64	31	24	19	98	.188
RP	Jack Little, Stanford	So.	0-60	3-0	25	0	0	0/2	16	45.1	26	5	3	8	58	.167

**-www.NCBWA.com-**