

The Mid-South Tribune Sports & Entertainment

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Kansas City Chiefs Benson and the Tennessee Titans linebacker Hill named the NFL Rookies of the Month

NEW YORK — Oct. 1, 2026 — Kansas City Chiefs tackle Kahlil Benson and Tennessee Titans linebacker Anthony Hill are the NFL Rookies of the Month for September (Weeks 1-3).

OFFENSE: T KAHLIL BENSON, KANSAS CITY CHIEFS •Benson, a 2026 undrafted free agent from Indiana, started in all three games at left tackle for Kansas City after not playing the position in college. Per Next Gen Stats, he has allowed seven quarterback pressures in 106 pass block snaps, the third fewest among all left tackles this season. Among all rookies with at least 15 pass block snaps, Benson has the highest percentage of one-on-one matchups (84.0 percent, 89-of-106). He has contributed to a Kansas City offense that has only allowed four sacks in 2026, tied for the fifth-fewest in the league.

•Benson becomes the eighth offensive lineman ever to win Offensive Rookie of the Month (October, 2018). He is the seventh tackle to win the award and first since Michael Oher (December/January, 2009). Benson became the fifth Chiefs player to win a Rookie of the Month award, joining Kareem

Hunt (September & December, 2017), Eric Berry (December, 2010), Nick Bolton (October, 2021) and Marcus Peters (December, 2015).

•Benson is the second former Indiana player to win Rookie of the Month, joining Jordan Howard (December/January, 2016).

DEFENSE: LB ANTHONY HILL, TENNESSEE TITANS

•Hill recorded a league-best 34 tackles and had two passes defensed in September. He is the first rookie to lead the league in tackles through the first three weeks of a season since Shaquille Leonard in 2018 (41 tackles with Indianapolis).

•Hill becomes the fifth Titans player to win a Rookie of the Month award, joining Jevon Kearse (September, November & December, 1999), A.J. Brown (December, 2019), Chris Johnson (September, 2008) and Marcus Mariota (September, 2015).

•Hill is the third former Texas player to earn a Rookie of the Month honor and second Longhorn to win Defensive Rookie of the Month, joining Tony Brackens (Defense - December, 1996) and Roy Williams (Offense – September, 2004).

UofM partners with Atavus Football to advance tackling & provide player evaluation

MEMPHIS, Tenn., October 2, 2026 - The University of Memphis football program has partnered with Atavus Football to strengthen tackling development and provide additional insight into player evaluation. The collaboration will give the Tigers data-driven information to improve position-specific tackling technique, and evaluate tackling consistency among prospective players.

Through the partnership, Memphis will use Atavus to evaluate game film and turn tackling performance into actionable coaching insights. The information will help the Tigers focus each position group on the techniques and situations they will face on game days, while also providing another source of information when evaluating players entering the program via the transfer portal.

"Atavus helps us understand

"Atavus helps us look beyond the highlight reel to evaluate how consistently a transfer player tackles and identify areas for improvement. That gives us better information to make informed decisions about who fits our program," Memphis Football Director of Athletics Performance, Ben Ashford said.

why missed tackles occur and how to correct them. That insight allows each position group to focus on the techniques and game situations they'll face on game days, making every practice rep more purposeful," University of Memphis head football coach, Charles Huff said.

Atavus also provides Memphis with a way to look beyond traditional highlights when evaluating

prospective players. By examining how consistently a transfer player tackles and identifying areas for improvement, the Tigers can incorporate tackling performance into the broader evaluation process used to determine a player's fit within the program.

"Atavus helps us look beyond the highlight reel to evaluate how consistently a transfer player tackles and identify areas for improvement. That gives us better information to make informed decisions about who fits our program," Memphis Football Director of Athletics Performance, Ben Ashford said.

Memphis football will use Atavus as part of its ongoing approach to player development and evaluation, connecting game film analysis to more focused coaching and practice work.

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Meet some of BIHMST Sports Correspondents



William M. Larsha, Jr.



Ashley Braun Gendek

BIHMST Travelers, join correspondents William M. Larsha, Jr. and Ashley Braun Gendek in their sports coverage of The University of Memphis Tigers, Memphis Grizzlies, TN Titans, Southern Heritage Classic, and more!

Marcus Stokes named to the Manning Award Stars



Marcus Stokes

NEW ORLEANS – University of Memphis quarterback Marcus Stokes collected another honor as he was one of eight quarterbacks named to the Manning Award Stars of the Week list, the award committee announced Monday.

The Manning Award was

created by the Allstate Sugar Bowl in 2004 to honor the college football accomplishments of Archie, Peyton and Eli Manning. It is the only quarterback award that includes candidates' bowl performances in its balloting.

Since the Manning Award began recognizing Stars of the Week in 2011, 628 different quarterbacks from 138 schools have been recognized.

The redshirt junior had another career day, going 20-for-25 with 318 passing yards and five touchdowns against Charlotte. His outing against the 49ers was highlighted by a 93-yard touch-

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For a Good Cause...Horseshoe Tunica and Caesars Entertainment present Kosten Foundation's Evening of Hope and Harmony to support pancreatic cancer awareness. Kick It 5K is set for October 25. See article on sports page 4.



Horseshoe Tunica and Caesars Entertainment executives present Alan Kosten, Annette Wiggins, and Valerie Perkins with a \$10,000 donation in support of An Evening of Hope & Harmony. The donation supports pancreatic cancer awareness efforts in DeSoto County and the Kosten Foundation's mission to fund pancreatic cancer research. See article on sports page 4



Award-Winning US Air Force Band Performs Free Concert...see sports-Military 3 ***

VisionQuest Concludes Trilogy on Disney+... see sports-Ent. 5 ***

Grizzlies Conclude Grizz Goes Back to School... see sports-Ent. 3 ***

Sen. Blackburn & Candidate for TN Gov. Files Lawsuit against Jack Smith... see sports-Military 2 ***

Billboard Names Colton Dawson a Country Music Up & Comer ... see sports-Ent. 6 ***

Haley & The Crushers... see sports-Ent. 6 ***

Memphis Madness at Memphis Zoo... see sports page 4

GAME WEEK

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