

# -Sports-

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## Eight finalists named for Art Rooney Award; Winner will be revealed at Super Bowl

NEW YORK — The eight finalists for the 2023 Art Rooney Sportsmanship Award have been named, the NFL recently announced. The award is presented each year to an NFL player who best demonstrates the qualities of on-field sportsmanship, including fair play, respect for the game and opponents, and integrity in competition.

The winner will be announced as part of the NFL Honors before Super Bowl LVIII.

The finalists, featuring four players from each conference, are defensive end **Maxx Crosby** (Las Vegas), linebacker **Khalil Mack** (Los Angeles Chargers), linebacker **C.J. Mosley** (New York Jets) and guard **Kevin Zeitler** (Baltimore) in the AFC, and safety **Budda Baker** (Arizona), fullback **Kyle Juszczyk** (San Francisco), quarterback **Dak Prescott** (Dallas) and linebacker **Bobby Wagner** (Seattle) in the NFC.

A panel of former players from the NFL Legends Community selected the eight finalists from the 32 NFL club nominees. The panel is comprised of Warrick Dunn, Larry Fitzgerald, Curtis Martin and Leonard Wheeler. The eight finalists will be listed on the Pro Bowl ballot under the NFL Sportsmanship Award category.

“I have enjoyed the process of learning about the men that have been nominated for the Art Rooney Sportsmanship Award,” said NFL Legend Larry Fitzgerald. “Each nominee has displayed the character of Mr. Rooney’s legacy. The award represents teamwork, competitiveness, hard work and integrity, while on the field.”

The award was created in 2014 in honor of the late founding owner of the Pittsburgh Steelers and Pro Football Hall of Famer Art Rooney, Sr.

## Head football coach Ryan Silverfield announces 34 sign intent letters for 2024 season

MEMPHIS, Tenn. Dec. 20, 2023 – University of Memphis head football coach Ryan Silverfield announced on Wednesday the signing of 34 student-athletes to National Letters of Intent to play for the Tigers beginning in 2024.

The class includes 14 high school seniors as well as 20 transfers. The group includes 16 offensive players, 15 defensive players, two specialists and one athlete.

The 2023 early signing day period class includes five players each from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Texas, four from Tennessee, two from South Carolina and one each from North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Idaho, Maine and Louisiana, as well as one from Australia.

Among the signees are nine offensive linemen, five linebackers, five defensive linemen, five defensive backs, four wide receivers, two running backs, one quarterback, one kicker, one punter and one athlete.

QB Arrington Maiden, RB Makari Bodiford, WR Brady Kluse, WR Keonde Henry, LB Nathan Thomason, OL Cameron Pascal, OL Calvin McMillan, OL Jonathan Young, DL Mond Cole, DB Samson Israel, RB Mario Anderson, OL Trent Holler, OL Keydrell Lewis, OL Izaiah Reed, OL Patrick Lucas Jr., DL Richard Kinley II, LB Jayden Flaker, LB Javante Mackey, LB Matt Hudson, DB Kourtlan Marsh, DB AJ Watts, DB Jaidyn Denis, P Joshua Sloan and K Caden Costa will all enroll in the spring for the Tigers.

**Mario Anderson**  
Running Back | 5-9 | 208  
Summerville, S.C. | Stratford HS | Newberry College | South Carolina  
Ran for 707 yards and three



touchdowns on 143 carries in his lone season as a Gamecock ... Logged 100-yard games against Tennessee and Vanderbilt ... Spent the previous four seasons at DII Newberry College where he amassed 3,301 rushing yards (third-most in school history) and 35 rushing touchdowns ... earned First Team All-America honors and was a finalist for the Harlon Hill Trophy in 2022 ... Two-time First Team All-Conference performer ... Rushed for over 100 yards in 16-of-29 games at Newberry.

**Jordan Bell**  
Athlete | 6-1 | 182  
Munford, Tenn. | Munford HS  
Three-star recruit by 247 Sports ... High school quarterback ... In 2023, Bell had more than 2,000 all-purpose yards, leading Munford to the first round of the TSSAA Class 5A football playoffs ... Passed for 1,467 yards and 16 touchdowns ... Rushed for 629 yards and had 10 rushing touchdowns ... Named to the Region 8-5A first-team offense.

**Kavion Benton**  
Defensive Line | 6-2 | 239  
Memphis, Tenn. | Southwind HS  
Consensus three-star recruit ... No. 40 player in the state of Tennessee by On3 and No. 43 by 247 Sports ... No. 141 and No. 143 defensive lineman in the country by On3 and 247 Sports, respectively ... Invited to play in the 2023 Liberty Bowl High School All-Star Game ... Was ranked No. 12 in the Commercial Appeal’s ‘Dandy Dozen’, a list of top-college football prospects in the area entering the season 2024 season ... Helped anchor a

Southwind defense that was undefeated during the regular season and posted five shutouts, allowing just 60 points all season ... Helped his team to the state semifinal round.

**Makari Bodiford**  
Running Back | 5-11 | 222  
Marietta, Ga. | George Walton HS  
Consensus three-star recruit ... Ranked as the No. 114 running back in the nation by ESPN ... 94th-ranked player overall from the state of Georgia by Rivals.com ... Ran for 712 yards (4.8 YPC) as a sophomore for George Walton ... Carried the ball 253 times for 1,582 yards (6.3 YPC) and 20 touchdowns as a junior, averaging 121.7 yards-per game ... Helped lead George Walton to the Georgia Class 7A State Championship game as a senior, running for 1,035 yards

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Lifetime, Blue Star, DirecTV Honor Military Spouses with “Gift of a Lifetime”  
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Ja Morant Named NBA Western Conference Player of the Week  
see sports page 2  
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Black Promoters Announce Jazz in the Garden Music Festival in Atlanta  
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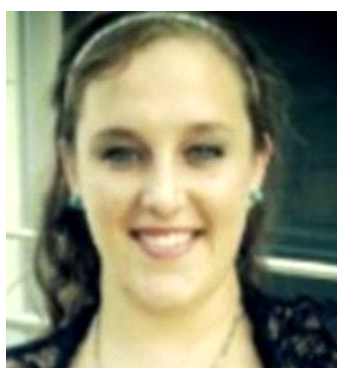
Titans Travel to Face Texans on New Year’s Eve  
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Memphis Hustle Acquires DeJon Jarreau  
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## Meet some of BIHMST sports correspondents



William M. Larsha, Jr.



Ashley Braun Gendek

BIH MST Travelers, join correspondents William M. Larsha, Jr. And Ashley Braun Gendek in their sports coverage of University of Memphis Tigers, Memphis Grizzlies, TN Titans, Southern Heritage Classic, FedEx St. Jude Championship, Soccer and more on The Mid-South Tribune and the Black Information Highway at blackinformationhighway.com  
Welcome, Travelers!

The Mid-South Tribune staff wishes you and yours a blessed, safe, and prosperous

Happy New Year!

## Tickets to Super Bowl Experience Presented by Toyota now on sale

Fans are also invited to Super Bowl Opening Night fueled by Gatorade to welcome Super Bowl players and coaches to Las Vegas.

Celebrate Super Bowl LVIII at Super Bowl Experience presented by Toyota at Mandalay Bay South Convention Center – NFL’s immersive football festival where kids 12 and under attend for free

sented by Toyota and Super Bowl Opening Night fueled by Gatorade.

Super Bowl Experience presented by Toyota – the NFL’s immersive football festival – is coming to Las Vegas on Wednesday, Feb. 7 – Saturday, Feb. 10 at the Mandalay Bay South Convention Center. General Admission tickets for Super Bowl Experience presented by Toyota start at \$25 and kids 12 and under

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NEW YORK — Starting now, local and visiting fans in Las Vegas can buy tickets to two of the biggest, most accessible Super Bowl LVIII celebrations: Super Bowl Experience pre-

## David Jones named to the American Athletic Conf. Honor Roll for third time



David Jones

IRVING, Texas, Dec. 26, 2023—Senior forward David Jones has been named to the American Athletic Conference Honor Roll for a third time after a big week on the hardwood. It’s his fourth weekly honor from the league of-ice this season.

Jones continued to be unstoppable in wins over No. 22 Virginia and Vanderbilt, averaging 27.0 points, 6.5 rebounds and 1.5 assists per game for the Tigers.

The St. John’s transfer shot 51.9 percent from the field, hitting 14-of-27 field goals and connecting on 6-of-9 attempts from 3-point range (66.7%). He was also a force in getting to the free throw line where he converted on 20-of-26 attempts.

Jones led a spirited effort from Memphis last Tuesday in a 77-54 win over the Cavaliers with 26 points and four rebounds while shooting 8-15 from the floor and a perfect 8-8 at the line.

On Saturday, Jones dropped 28 points and nine boards while going 6-12 from the field, 4-6 from long distance and 12-18 at the stripe.

The Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic product leads the AAC in scoring (21.4), ranks second in 3-pointers made (31), fifth in steals per game (2.08) and sixth in 3-point percentage (41.9). He tops the league with eight games of 20-plus points, no one else has more than five.

Nationally, Jones ranks 11th in scoring, 12th in total points (257) and free throws made (72) and 15th in free throws attempted (91).

The No. 19 Tigers (10-2) are back in action Saturday when they host Austin Peay at 6 p.m. on ESPN+. It will be the final contest before Memphis gets going with conference play at Tulsa on January 4.

For complete information on Memphis Tiger Men’s Basketball, visit www.GoTigersGo.com and follow the team’s social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.



Watch for The Mid-South Tribune’s 29th Annual Black History Month Edition. Coming in February 2024!

Email your special events, news and photos to MSTNews@prodigy.net or BlackInfoHwy@prodigy.net or MSTentertainment@prodigy.net