



## **For Immediate Release:**

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### **2010 Coleman Company-Johnny Bench Award delivered by Papa John's Pizza Watch List Released**

**WICHITA, KANSAS** - The Greater Wichita Area Sports Commission announced the official watch list for the 2010 *Coleman Company-Johnny Bench Award delivered by Papa John's Pizza*. Fifty-three catchers were nominated for the award by their coaches. Because the award is given annually to the top division one collegiate catcher, the list will be updated to include other candidates until May 5, 2010.

The watch list will be narrowed down to ten semifinalists, whom will be announced May 19, 2010. Ballots will be sent to the national voting panel at the end of May for a vote to determine the three finalists. The finalists will be announced June 2, 2010 prior to the NCAA Regionals and Major League Baseball Draft. A final vote among the national committee will occur during the College World Series. All finalists will be brought to Wichita and the winner will be announced at the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Wichita Sports Banquet on July 1, 2010.

"We are extremely appreciative to the Coleman Company, Papa John's Pizza and Mr. Johnny Bench for supporting this prestigious award," stated Bob Hanson, President/CEO of the Sports Commission. "They are the ones who make all of this possible."

While Bench is remembered for his offense, he may have had the greatest impact behind the plate. He was the first receiver to use a protective helmet in the field, popularized catching one-handed and kept his throwing hand behind his back to protect it from foul tips.

Bench's career honors include: National League Rookie of the Year (1968); National League Most Valuable Player (1970, 1972); World Series Most Valuable Player (1976); 14-time All-Star and 10-time Gold Glove winner. In 1980, he set an endurance record by catching 100+ games for 13 consecutive seasons. Bench was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in January 1989 with the fourth highest percentage of total votes cast.

Johnny Bench presented University of Oklahoma catcher, J.T. Wise, with the award last June in Wichita, Kansas. Chris Henderson of George Mason University and Tony Sanchez of Boston College were the other finalists for the award. Eleven former finalists are currently playing in Major League Baseball.

*Previous winners are:*

2009	J.T. Wise	University of Oklahoma
2008	Buster Posey	Florida State University
2007	Edward Easley	Mississippi State University
2006	Jake Smith	East Carolina University
2005	Jeff Clement	University of Southern California
2004	Kurt Suzuki	California State University - Fullerton
2003	Ryan Garko	Stanford University
2002	Jeremy Brown	University of Alabama
2001	Kelly Shoppach	Baylor University
2000	Brad Cresse	Louisiana State University

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Jeff Arnold	SR	University of Louisville
Jared Avchen	SR	East Carolina University
Chris Berset	SR	University of Michigan
Alex Black	JR	Coppin State University
Ty Boyles	SR	Gardner-Webb University
Ross Brayton	SR	Cal Poly
Tyler Bullock	SR	Southern Illinois University Carbondale
Dan Burkhart	JR	Ohio State University
Tony Caldwell	JR	Auburn University
Chad Comer	JR	University of Texas at Arlington
Josh Cryer	JR	Southeastern Louisiana University
Kevin David	JR	Oklahoma State University
Aaron Dudley	SR	University of Toledo
Justin Echeverria	SR	Stony Brook University
Tyler Elkins	SR	Bowling Green State
Kyle Enders	SR	University of South Carolina
Erick Fernandez	JR	Georgetown University
Kevin Flynn	JR	Hofstra University
Blake Forsythe	JR	University of Tennessee
Dean Forthum	SR	Columbia University
Micah Gibbs	JR	Louisiana State University
Victor Gomez	JR	Marshall University
Travis Graves	SR	University of Southern Mississippi
Ben Heath	JR	Pennsylvania State University
Bryan Holaday	SR	Texas Christian University
Jose Iglesias	SR	Coastal Carolina University
Ed Jayjack	SR	University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Aaron Johnson	SR	University of Illinois
Jim Klocke	SR	Southeast Missouri State
Kyle Knudson	SR	University of Minnesota
Matt Koch	SO	Loyola Marymount University
Francis Larson	SR	UC Irvine
Rafael Lopez	JR	Florida State University
Myckie Lugbauer	SR	University of Maine
Kyle Mahoney	JR	High Point University
Jeremy Mayo	JR	Texas Tech University
James McCann	SO	University of Arkansas
Cameron McConnell	JR	University of Notre Dame
Mike Murray	SR	Wake Forest University
Rafael Neda	JR	University of New Mexico
John Nester	JR	Clemson University
Marcus Nidiffer	SR	University of Kentucky
Joe Oliveira	SR	University of the Pacific
Tyler Ogle	SO	University of Oklahoma
Dominic Piazza	JR	Cal State Northridge
Nick Rickles	SO	Stetson University
Cameron Rupp	JR	University of Texas
Joey Stevens	SR	Eastern Kentucky University
Beau Taylor	SO	University of Central Florida
John Turk	SR	University of Akron
Cody Stanley	JR	UNC Wilmington
Chris Wallace	SR	University of Houston

For more information about the Coleman Company - Johnny Bench Award delivered Papa John's Pizza, visit [www.wichitasports.com](http://www.wichitasports.com) or call (316) 265-6236.