



NATIONAL COLLEGIATE BASEBALL WRITERS' ASSOCIATION

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Contact: Russell Luna (615) 308-6245

Russell.luna@unt.edu

2026 NCBWA STOPPER OF THE YEAR PRESEASON WATCH LIST REVEALED

Link: <https://ncbwa.com/a/33eec1af>

DALLAS (NCBWA) – A total of 105 players has been named to the initial 2026 Watch List for the 21st Annual National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association Stopper of the Year Award, given to the top relief pitcher in NCAA Division I Baseball, the association announced Tuesday. The institution or conference sports information directors submitted nominees.

It was announced today that Arizona's Tony Pluta, the 2025 Stopper of the Year Honoree, sustained an injury and will be undergoing UCL repair surgery and is out for the season. Last year, he posted a 1.46 earned run average in 30 mound stints, a 3-0 record, four saves and 34 strikeouts in 37 innings for the Wildcats.

Fourteen preseason NCBWA All-America selections made the list. The first-teamers included: Pluta (Arizona), Cal Higgins (Texas) and Ryan Lynch (Coastal Carolina). Second-teamers included: Dominick Carbone (Coastal Carolina), Brady Frederick (Tennessee), Robert Orloski (UTSA) and Isaac Yeager (Oregon State). Third-teamers included: Ryan Bilka (Miami (Fla.)), Alex Lyon (College of Charleston), Walker McDuffie (North Carolina) and Kros Sivley (Southern Miss). Fourth-teamers were: Zac Cowan (LSU), Lucas Hartman (Virginia) and Ryan Hetzler (Auburn).

The Southeastern Conference led all leagues with 17 players named to the watch list. The Atlantic Coast Conference and Big Ten Conference followed with 13 selections each, while the Big 12 placed nine players on the list and the Sun Belt added seven.

Of the initial 76 members, nine were featured on last year's midseason watch list. In total, 18 conferences are represented on this list, with at least two players coming from 16 different leagues.

Texas pitcher J. Brent Cox captured the inaugural Stopper of the Year Award in 2005, followed by Don Czyz of Kansas in 2006 and Luke Prihoda of Sam Houston State in 2007. Georgia's Joshua Fields earned the honor in 2008, with San Diego State's Addison Reed winning in 2009 and Texas' Chance Ruffin in 2010. The Longhorns' Corey Knebel claimed the award in 2011 before Southeastern Louisiana's Stefan Lopez took home the honor in 2012. UCLA's David Berg won in 2013, Louisville's Nick Burdi followed in 2014, and Berg became the award's first two-time recipient in 2015. Miami (Fla.)'s Bryan Garcia was honored in 2016, followed by Stanford's Lincoln Hensman in 2017 and Florida's Michael Byrne in 2018. UCLA's Holden Powell earned the award in 2019, Arkansas' Kevin Kopps won in 2021, Texas State's Tristan Stivors in 2022, Oral Roberts' Cade Denton in 2023, Texas A&M's Evan Aschenbeck in 2024 and Arizona's Tony Pluta most recently claimed the honor in 2025.

The NCBWA, founded in 1962, presents the Dick Howser Trophy to the nation's top player and the Mike Martin National Coach of the Year to the nation's top coach. It also selects All-America Teams for all Divisions, a Division I Freshman All-American team, Division I, II and III Players of the Week and Division I, II and III Players of the Year.

-- NCBWA.com --

2026 NCBWA Preseason Stopper of the Year Watch List (as of Feb. 10, 2026)

RELIEF PITCHERS (104)

Player	School	Class	ERA	W-L	APP	GS	CG	SV	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Davis Aiken	Col. of Charleston	Grad.	5.06	0-2	29	0	0	14	32.0	34	19	18	10	32
Hunter Alexander	Central Arkansas	Sr.	6.44	4-5	20	8	0	2	65.2	83	52	47	33	65
Joe Allen	Clemson	Sr.	1.84	5-0	23	0	0	0	29.1	20	9	6	17	32
Gavin Alveti^	Austin Peay	Sr.	5.71	1-0	20	1	0	1	41.0	50	30	26	3	25
Brandon Arvidson	Tennessee	r-Jr.	4.19	2-0	30	2	0	1	38.2	28	23	18	22	70
Ira Austin IV^	Kentucky	Sr.	3.90	4-3	23	0	0	0	30.0	23	21	13	23	34
Reese Bassinger	West Virginia	Grad.	4.23	7-1	30	0	0	5	61.2	63	36	29	12	43
Zach Bates	Illinois	Jr.	2.83	2-2	23	0	0	8	28.2	15	10	9	16	34
Max Bianchini	USC Upstate	r-Jr.	4.32	5-3	24	1	0	1	50.0	48	28	24	27	39
Ryan Bilka^ (3)	Miami (Fla.)	Sr.	1.69	6-2	18	0	0	3	62.0	43	18	15	13	57
Cody Brasch^	Louisiana	Jr.	7.56	1-2	9	7	0	0	16.2	18	15	14	17	21
Walker Brodt	Winthrop	Jr.	7.36	3-3	30	0	0	1	44.0	58	42	36	19	37
Thomas Burns	Texas	Jr.	3.71	1-2	19	0	0	4	26.2	17	13	11	16	40
Carson Byers	Miami (Ohio)	Sr.	2.61	2-2	23	2	0	6	76.0	59	27	22	24	72
Dominick Carbone (2)	Coastal Carolina	Jr.	2.36	6-0	28	0	0	5	41.0	37	13	11	9	52
Parker Coil	Arkansas	Sr.	1.27	3-0	14	0	0	1	21.1	22	5	3	2	24
Zac Cowan (4)	LSU	Sr.	2.94	3-3	22	2	0	6	52.0	44	21	17	12	60
Braden Curry	Toledo	So.	3.16	2-0	17	0	0	3	42.2	35	17	15	23	45
Shane Keup	Winthrop	r-Jr.	5.90	3-4	23	2	0	2	39.2	39	32	26	19	38
Jake Kramer^	Purdue	Sr.	3.00	4-1	22	1	0	11	39.0	34	13	13	7	35
John Damozonio	Saint Mary's	Sr.	6.20	4-3	20	7	0	1	53.2	72	47	37	24	44
Wyatt Danilowicz	Louisville	Sr.	2.70	0-1	28	0	0	3	33.1	19	14	10	25	52
Ben Davis	Mississippi State	Sr.	3.77	4-2	23	4	0	1	57.1	52	33	24	24	61
Preston Davis	Little Rock	r-Sr.	1.69	1-2	7	0	0	1	10.2	4	5	2	9	15
Gavin DeVooght	Michigan	Jr.	5.17	2-2	5	4	0	0	15.2	13	11	9	8	14
Turner Doran	Western Michigan	Sr.	4.21	1-2	16	0	0	1	25.2	23	14	12	14	30
Chandler Dorsey	UCF	Sr.	5.40	0-0	5	0	0	0	5.0	8	5	3	2	4
Mitch Dye	Illinois	Sr.	7.43	0-2	21	0	0	1	23.0	28	22	19	14	29
Zach Edwards	Oregon State	So.	5.79	1-0	16	0	0	1	18.2	17	13	12	9	22
Carson Estridge	West Virginia	Sr.	6.14	3-1	22	3	0	5	48.1	54	34	33	18	48
Kade Eudy	TCU	So.	3.75	1-1	20	0	0	6	24.0	22	10	10	8	20
Brady Frederick^ (2)	Tennessee	Jr.	2.67	8-2	24	0	0	4	77.2	50	25	23	19	76
Clayton Freshcorn	Texas A&M	Jr.	4.67	2-2	23	0	0	2	27.0	24	15	14	9	33
Jack Giordano	Oregon State	So.	10.47	1-2	18	2	0	0	16.1	19	22	19	13	21
Miller Green	Vanderbilt	Jr.	3.80	1-2	20	0	0	5	23.2	25	11	10	11	28
Mikey Gray^	Pitt	Sr.	4.01	2-1	20	2	0	3	42.2	33	26	19	20	53
Chris Grothues	UCLA	r-Jr.	4.96	4-1	21	0	0	0	32.2	25	18	18	15	31
Max Grubbs	Texas	Sr.	2.84	6-2	22	1	0	5	57.0	50	22	18	14	61
Josh Gunther^	South Carolina	Jr.	3.41	1-3	26	0	0	6	29.0	21	13	11	18	47
Gage Haley	Little Rock	Jr.	7.71	2-2	22	3	0	1	46.2	69	45	40	17	42
Lucas Hartman^ (4)	Virginia	Grad.	2.70	5-1	22	1	0	3	53.1	34	18	16	22	62
Easton Hawk	UCLA	So.	4.50	0-1	26	0	0	8	24.0	25	12	12	7	31
Ryan Hetzler (4)	Auburn	Jr.	3.86	2-1	19	0	0	8	35.0	38	16	15	4	25
Erik Hoffberg	Gonzaga	Jr.	4.00	2-4	23	0	0	7	54.0	45	29	24	24	71
Jackson Hohensee^	Austin Peay	r-Sr.	2.97	1-3	26	0	0	13	30.1	20	12	10	13	43
Blake Hooks	Louisiana Tech	Grad.	2.78	4-0	25	0	0	9	35.2	26	15	11	23	46
Darin Horn	Coastal Carolina	r-Sr.	2.73	5-1	19	0	0	0	26.1	18	9	8	19	34
Cal Higgins^ (1)	Texas	Grad.	1.87	3-2	1.87	22	0	6	43.1	28	12	9	11	52
Brandon Jaenke^	Minnesota	Sr.	4.84	5-3	11	10	4	0	61.0	61	34	27	22	56
Donovann Jackson	UC Santa Barbara	Sr.	2.06	4-0	21	0	0	2	43.2	28	11	10	20	43
Evan Jones	UCF	Jr.	3.18	1-1	14	0	0	4	11.1	10	5	4	5	16
Alex Kranzler	Vanderbilt	Jr.	3.62	6-1	18	0	0	3	37.1	34	18	15	7	40
Ryan Kroepel	Utah Tech	Jr.	3.09	4-2	19	1	0	8	23.1	21	11	8	9	14
Max Kuhle	James Madison	Sr.	4.02	2-4	19	5	1	3	56.0	52	32	25	21	62
Cooper Lanz	Santa Clara	Sr.	3.75	4-2	13	4	0	0	36.0	17	19	15	17	28
Oisin Lee	Notre Dame	So.	6.16	0-0	16	0	0	0	19.0	19	14	13	6	26
Caden Leonard	Kent State	Grad.	4.13	3-0	20	0	0	1	28.1	30	15	13	11	35
Mason Lerma	UC Davis	Jr.	1.01	3-0	28	1	0	2	35.2	34	7	4	5	35
Cooper Littledike	Utah Valley	r-Sr.	2.27	3-1	19	0	0	6	31.2	28	15	8	12	30

Dimond Loosli	Penn State	Sr.	3.82	5-1	22	0	0	0	33.0	34	17	14	13	30
Ryan Lynch (1)	Coastal Carolina	Grad.	0.56	2-1	28	0	0	9	32.0	23	8	2	10	36
Alex Lyon (3)	Col. of Charleston	r-Sr.	3.47	10-1	31	0	0	0	59.2	63	30	23	13	34
Isaiah Magdaleno	Hawaii	Jr.	2.70	4-1	24	0	0	9	60.0	46	19	18	11	77
Nate Marshall	Eastern Illinois	Sr.	3.94	5-1	15	2	0	1	29.2	27	15	13	9	20
Matthew Mathijs	North Carolina	Grad.	4.34	1-1	17	0	0	2	18.2	20	11	9	8	30
Daniel McAuliff	Pitt	Grad.	7.45	2-3	20	0	0	3	19.1	31	20	16	16	18
Ben McDougal	West Virginia	Sr.	3.63	1-1	19	0	0	2	22.1	14	10	9	8	17
Reece McDuffie	Tennessee Tech	Sr.	3.13	4-0	21	0	0	5	54.2	54	20	19	6	28
Walker McDuffie (3)	North Carolina	So.	3.74	3-3	28	1	0	7	55.1	35	25	23	25	72
Jacob McGovern	Clemson	Jr.	3.86	3-1	20	2	0	2	35.0	20	21	15	12	44
Colby McNeely	Winthrop	Sr.	7.31	0-0	15	4	0	0	28.1	34	31	23	24	23
Anderson Nance	NC State	So.	3.50	8-2	18	1	0	1	54.0	53	21	21	11	53
Jack O'Connor	UCLA	Sr.	1.67	3-0	27	0	0	1	27.0	21	5	5	6	18
Steven Oliva	UTRGV	Sr.	3.56	3-2	19	0	0	6	30.1	24	12	12	9	28
Robert Orloski (2)	UTSA	Jr.	3.36	8-0	27	0	0	9	72.1	55	29	27	27	77
Shawn Parnell	Northern Kentucky	r-Jr.	3.37	2-2	21	0	0	0	34.2	27	21	13	27	38
Tony Pluta \$(1)	Arizona	Sr.	1.46	3-0	30	0	0	14	37.0	28	9	6	7	34
Daniel Powell	Kennesaw State	Jr.	4.50	7-2	26	2	0	1	56.0	42	33	28	29	61
Brock Puckett	Lipscomb	Grad.	2.91	2-3	19	0	0	3	21.2	13	10	7	17	27
Walter Quinn^	TCU	Sr.	3.46	2-5	25	0	0	11	38.0	31	18	15	24	40
Boede Rahe^	Kansas	r-Jr.	2.83	6-4	13	12	5	0	66.1	44	27	19	21	97
Easton Rakers	Lindenwood	Sr.	2.03	1-2	23	0	0	4	44.1	40	13	10	15	43
Cal Randall	UCLA	Jr.	3.08	2-1	28	0	0	0	26.1	17	10	9	15	31
Ben Rehkow	Winthrop	Sr.	4.82	1-3	20	0	0	3	28.0	25	20	15	8	23
Bo Rhudy^	Tennessee	Jr.	3.16	2-0	21	1	0	5	37.0	29	13	13	5	44
Justin Ritz	Coppin State	Sr.	4.11	3-2	27	0	0	7	57.0	46	30	26	13	36
Albert Roblez^	Oregon State	Sr.	2.78	4-3	19	3	0	4	58.1	34	20	18	28	79
Hunter Royal	Little Rock	Grad.	6.64	3-2	29	0	0	2	42.0	45	34	31	42	50
Braydon Sanford	Oral Roberts	Jr.	4.55	3-0	16	0	0	1	31.2	26	17	16	17	39
Jake Schweitzer	Louisville	So.	2.34	4-3	25	0	0	3	42.1	31	14	11	19	23
Kade Shatwell	Austin Peay	Sr.	9.19	2-2	17	0	0	4	31.1	46	32	32	14	25
Kros Sivley (3)	Southern Miss	Sr.	4.14	7-1	22	8	0	0	71.2	73	39	33	20	58
Hayden Smith^	Troy	Jr.	3.48	0-0	14	0	0	0	10.1	9	4	4	5	15
Adam Troy^	USC	Jr.	5.79	2-2	21	0	0	6	23.1	23	17	15	11	27
Cole Tryba	UC Santa Barbara	Jr.	3.48	0-1	20	0	0	6	31	33	17	12	12	46
Bryce Turner	FIU	So.	3.47	2-0	18	0	0	0	23.1	17	10	9	11	26
Ian Umlandt	Oregon	Sr.	2.55	6-2	18	5	1	1	59.0	66	23	17	16	44
Noah Waldeck	Saint Mary's	Jr.	6.34	1-1	28	1	0	2	32.2	42	29	23	16	34
Maddox Webb^	Mississippi State	Jr.	4.04	4-1	24	1	0	5	55.2	54	30	25	34	61
Will Whelan	Minnesota	Jr.	6.45	0-3	24	1	0	3	44.2	42	37	32	26	47
Carson Wiggins	Arkansas	So.	3.21	1-1	14	0	0	3	14.0	7	6	5	9	20
Harrison Wilson	Winthrop	Sr.	5.09	5-1	17	8	0	1	58.1	57	41	33	31	54
Logan Wilson	Northern Kentucky	Sr.	4.93	1-1	21	2	0	1	38.1	37	29	21	22	35
Andrew Wright	Cal St. Fullerton	Jr.	2.40	3-2	27	0	0	10	41.1	35	16	11	13	49
Isaac Yeager (2)	Oregon State	Sr.	3.78	4-1	24	0	0	7	47.2	41	21	20	22	57

\$ = 2025 Stopper of the Year

* = 2025 Stopper of the Year Finalist

(1) = Preseason NCBWA All-America First-Team

(2) = Preseason NCBWA All-America Second-Team

(3) = Preseason NCBWA All-America Third-Team

(4) = Preseason NCBWA All-America Fourth-Team

^ = stats from previous school