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## **CCHA ANNOUNCES THREE FINALISTS FOR TOP INDIVIDUAL AWARDS** *Winners will be honored March 20 at the Fox Theatre.*



**FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich.** – The Central Collegiate Hockey Association today announced the top three finalists for the six major individual awards that will be presented on Thursday, March 20 at historic Fox Theatre in downtown Detroit.

RBC Financial Group CCHA Player of the Year finalists include Miami senior Ryan Jones, Michigan senior Kevin Porter and Michigan State junior Jeff Lerg. Jones, a Minnesota draft pick, finished the regular season on top of the CCHA in both conference goals and overall goals. His 44 points led a Miami team that was nationally ranked in the top five all season. Porter played in all 28 conference games and recorded 42 points, winning the CCHA scoring title. The Phoenix Coyotes draft pick currently leads the nation in scoring with 27-27-54 and has been a key element in a team that has spent much of the season atop the national polls. Lerg has been a workhorse for the Spartans this season, leading the conference in victories (19), minutes (1666:59), save percentage (.935), saves (786) and shutouts (4). He finished third in the conference with a 1.98 GAA.

The three finalists for Coach of the Year are Bob Daniels of Ferris State, Enrico Blasi of Miami and Michigan's Red Berenson. Daniels led the Bulldogs, picked to finish ninth in the conference, to a fifth-place finish, a spot in the CCHA quarterfinals and a 5-2-1 record against Michigan, Miami and Notre Dame. Blasi's RedHawks finished second in the CCHA and, with 152 goals, are the only team in the country to average more than four goals per game. The Berenson-led Wolverines finished first in the CCHA regular season, spent much of the season ranked first nationally, and are in the top five nationally in both team offense and team defense.

Three skaters were named finalists for Rookie of the Year honors in Miami's Carter Camper, Max Pacioretty of Michigan and Michigan State's Jeff Petry. Camper finished third in the CCHA in rookie scoring with 10-14-24 despite playing only 20 games. He led all rookies with a 1.20 points-per game average. Pacioretty, a draft pick of Montreal, led rookies in scoring with 12-16-28, including six power-play goals. He finished third overall in the CCHA with a +20 rating. Petry placed second among rookie defensemen with 16 points. The Edmonton draft pick played in all 28 conference games, averaged .57 points-per game and finished with a +9 rating.

Junior Tyler Eckford of Alaska, Miami junior Alec Martinez and sophomore Eddie Del Grosso of Nebraska-Omaha are the finalists for Best Offensive Defenseman. Eckford, a New Jersey draft pick, led defensemen with 18 assists and 23 points. Martinez, who was drafted by the L.A. Kings, finished with 17 points and a +15 rating. Del Grosso wound up second in defensemen scoring with 21 points, which included three power-play goals and a pair of game-winning goals.

Martinez is also a finalist for the Best Defensive Defenseman along with Michigan junior Mark Mitera and Michigan State senior Daniel Vukovic. Martinez led Miami's defense which finished atop the CCHA in both team defense and penalty killing. Mitera, an Anaheim draft pick, played all 28 conference games with 13 points and a +17 ranking. Vukovic also played in all 28 games, recording 17 points and a rating of +12.

CCHA Defensive Forward of the Year nominees include Miami junior Justin Mercier, Michigan senior Kevin Porter and Michigan State junior Justin Abdelkader. Mercier, who was drafted by Colorado, registered 23 points and was +13. In addition to winning the scoring title, Porter finished second with a rating of +23. Abdelkader, a Red Wings draft pick, finished with a 13-14-27 scoring line and +11.

The CCHA Awards kick off CCHA Championship Weekend on Thursday, March 20. The banquet, an Academy Awards-style event with music videos, video highlights and special awards presentations, is held at historic Fox Theatre in downtown Detroit, across from Comerica Park. The banquet begins with a social hour presented by the RBC Financial Group at 6:30 p.m. during which a cash bar will be available and light hors d'oeuvres will be served. The Awards Program will be at 7:30 p.m. and will last approximately one hour and 20 minutes. Banquet tickets are \$15 and can be purchased by calling the CCHA at (248) 888-0600 or at the door the day of the event.

### **TOP THREE AWARD FINALISTS**

#### **PLAYER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS**

Ryan Jones, Miami  
Kevin Porter, Michigan  
Jeff Lerg, Michigan State

#### **COACH OF THE YEAR FINALISTS**

Bob Daniels, Ferris State  
Enrico Blasi, Miami  
Red Berenson, Michigan

#### **ROOKIE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS**

Carter Camper, Miami  
Max Pacioretty, Michigan  
Jeff Petry, Michigan State

#### **BEST OFFENSIVE DEFENSEMAN FINALISTS**

Tyler Eckford, Alaska  
Alec Martinez, Miami  
Eddie Del Grosso, Nebraska-Omaha

#### **BEST DEFENSIVE DEFENSEMAN FINALISTS**

Alec Martinez, Miami  
Mark Mitera, Michigan  
Daniel Vukovic, Michigan State

#### **BEST DEFENSIVE FORWARD FINALISTS**

Justin Mercier, Miami  
Kevin Porter, Michigan  
Justin Abdelkader, Michigan State

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