

Stroud, Henderson, Burke Finalists For Shaun Alexander Freshman Of The Year



Ohio State has its fair share of talented freshmen. At least that's what the Maxwell Football Club selection committee claims.

The prestigious organization announced 14 semifinalists for the Shaun Alexander Freshman of the Year award on Thursday afternoon, with quarterback C.J. Stroud, running back TreVeyon Henderson and cornerback Denzel Burke as the three Buckeyes to make the list — the most of any school in college football.

Stroud could receive yet another accolade after becoming the first player in Big Ten history to earn Offensive Player of the Year, Quarterback of the Year and Freshman of the Year honors on Wednesday. He completed 70.9 percent of his passes for 3,862 yards and 38 touchdowns with only five interceptions in 11 regular-season games, ranking third nationally in quarterback rating (182.2), fourth in passing yards per game (351.1) and fifth in passing touchdowns among FBS quarterbacks this year.

Henderson showcased his athleticism in the season opener against Minnesota when he broke free for a 70-yard touchdown reception. He earned more snaps in the Buckeyes Week 2 loss to Oregon before taking over as the team's starter against Tulsa — when he rushed for an Ohio State freshman record 270 yards and three touchdowns — and led the backfield the rest of the year.

The Hopewell, Va., native carried the ball 166 times for 1,165 yards (7.02 ypc) and 15 touchdowns while catching 23 passes for 285 yards and four touchdowns in Ohio State's 12 games. His 19 total touchdowns broke Maurice Clarett's record (18) for total scores by a freshman in school history.

Denzel Burke started in all 12 of Ohio State's regular-season games — immediately establishing himself as the No. 1 corner. According to Pro Football Focus, he held opposing receivers to 30 catches for 321 yards and zero touchdowns on 62 total targets.

Georgia is the only other school with multiple semifinalists as tight end Brock Bowers and cornerback Kelee Ringo claim two spots. The nine remaining freshmen are Clemson safety Andrew Mukuba, Coastal Carolina defensive end Josiah Stewart, Marshall running back Rasheen Ali, Miami quarterback Tyler Van Dyke, Oklahoma quarterback Caleb Williams, Oklahoma State defensive end Collin Oliver, Texas wide receiver Xavier Worthy, Texas A&M cornerback Tyreek Chappell and Wisconsin running back

Braelon Allen are the other semifinalists.

The Maxwell Club will announce three finalists for the Shaun Alexander Freshman of the Year award on Dec. 21. The winner will be announced before the national championship game on Jan. 10.