Byard named FWAA Freshman All-American

Becomes fourth All-American under Stockstill

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FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (FWAA) - The 12th annual Football Writers Association of America Freshman All-America Team has been announced and Middle Tennessee's Kevin Byard is on the prestigious list. Byard, a safety, is the third Freshman All-American in school history and the first since 2007.

Byard joins OL Brandon Westbrook (2000) and QB Dwight Dasher (2007) as the only Freshman All-American's for the Raiders. Byard is also the fourth All-American under Rick Stockstill (Damon Nickson, Chris McCoy, Dwight Dasher).

Byard, a redshirt freshman from Lithonia, Ga., also earmed a spot on Phil Steele's National Postseason All-Freshman Team while garnering second team all-SBC honors. Byard came up with numerous plays for the Blue Raiders all year. In a win at Memphis he returned an interception 68 yards for a touchdown and provided the game-winning score against Troy with a pick he brought back 77 yards for a touchdown.

For the year, Byard collected 74 tackles, led the team with four interceptions, and forced two fumbles.

The team was selected by an 11-person panel of nationally-prominent writers led by Mike Griffith of the MLive Media Group. Both true freshmen (15 players) and redshirt freshmen (15 players) were considered for the team and are so noted.

Offense

QB—Johnny Manziel, Texas A&M, 6-1, 200, Kerrville, Texas
*RB—Kenneth Dixon, Louisiana Tech, 6-0, 215, Strong, Ark.
*RB — Todd Gurley, Georgia, 6-1, 218, Tarboro, N.C.
*WR — Amari Cooper, Alabama, 6-1, 198, Miami, Fla
WR — J.D. McKissic, Arkansas State, 5-10, 185, Phenix City, Ala.
WR— Davante Adams, Fresno State, 6-2, 200, Palo Alto, Calif.
OL — Tyler Johnstone, Oregon, 6-6; 292, Chandler, Ariz.

OL—Jake Brendel, UCLA, 6-4, 295, Plano, Texas
OL— Jack Allen, Michigan State, 6-1, 295, Hinsdale, Ill
OL—Austin Blythe, Iowa, 6-3, 275, Williamsburg, Iowa
OL—Le'Raven Clark, Texas Tech, 6-5, 303, Rockdale, Texas
OL — Parker Ehinger, Cincinnati, 6-7, 290, Rockford, Mich.
*TE—Devin Funchess, Michigan, 6-5, 229, Farmington Hills, Mich.

Defense
*DL Devonte Fields, TCU, 6-4, 240, Arlington, Texas
*DL Leonard Williams, Southern Cal, 6-5, 270, Daytona Beach, Fla.
DL Deion Barnes, Penn State, 6-4, 246, Philadelphia, Penn.
DL Samuel Ukwuachu, Boise State, 6-4, 222, Pearland, Texas
LB —Denzel Nkemdiche, Ole Miss, 5-11, 203, Loganville, Ga.
LB— Tyler Matakevich, Temple, 6-1. 220, Stratford, Conn.
LB—Kyler Fackrell, Utah State, 6-5, 236, Mesa, Ariz.
LB—Cory James, Colorado State, 6-0, 235, Del Rio, Texas
*DB- Ronald Darby, Florida State, 5-11, 189, Oxon Hill, Md.
*DB- KeiVarae Russell, Notre Dame, 5-11, 182, Everett, Wash.
*DB-Trevon Stewart, Houston, 5-9, 183, Patterson, La.
DB-**Kevin Byard**, Middle Tennessee, 5-11, 220, Lithonia, Ga.

Special Teams
*P—Tyler Williams, Marshall, 6-0, 195, Fort Wayne, Ind.
*K—Austin Lopez, San Jose State, 6-0, 170, Euless, Texas
PR—Jaime Wilson, Western Michigan, 5-11, 196, Belle Glade, Fla.
*KR—Duke Johnson, Miami (Fla.), 5-9, 188, Miami, Fla.
*AP-Stefon Diggs, Maryland, 6-1, 185, Gaithersburg, Md.
*-True Freshman

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