

Reynolds: Comeback Player of the Year Awards Analysis

RYAN REYNOLDS // AUG 28, 2025



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Last year, we broke the Comeback Player of the Year market as sportsbooks, and many bettors, did not take the AP's new guidance on this award into account. Now that we officially live in a new Comeback Player of the Year environment, let's see how we can update our process and apply it to this year's group of contenders.

Comeback Player of the Year (CPOY) Trends

- Over the last decade, seven quarterbacks, two wide receivers, and one safety have won the CPOY.
- A quarterback has won the CPOY seven years in a row.
- Last year's winner, **Joe Burrow**, has won two of the last four.
- Vikings quarterback **Sam Darnold** would have likely won this award last year if not for the rule changes caused by 2023's winner, **Joe Flacco**.
- Flacco came off the street, going 4-1 for the Browns while only appearing in five regular-season games in 2023.
- As a result, eligibility requires recovery from a major injury or illness for contention. The career resurrection and poor performance arcs are, at least for now, dead.
- Team success is a factor in this race, as each CPOY winner over the last decade played for a team that either made the postseason or otherwise had a winning record.
- Burrow's CPOY win last year is the only one that came while playing for a team that didn't make the postseason.
- A running back has not won this award since **Garrison Hearst** did so back in 2001.

What We're Looking for in a CPOY Candidate

We are looking for a quarterback coming off a major injury whose team has a path to postseason contention. Anyone else is going to need to be a household name or have an ultra-compelling story to contend for this race, unless the quarterbacks fail.

CPOY Notes

- Trevor Lawrence** (+500) has a better shot to win his division than current favorite **Dak Prescott** (+275) does, especially in the wake of the **Micah Parsons** trade.

- Lions EDGE **Aidan Hutchinson** (+275) is the co-favorite in this race heading toward Opening Day. An EDGE hasn't won this race since **Greg Ellis** did so in 2007; however, Hutchinson is a household name, on a playoff contender, who is coming back from a major injury.
- 49ers running back **Christian McCaffrey** (+300) would have likely won the 2022 race under the new guidance for this award, as **Geno Smith** won off the career resurrection arc that is no longer eligible. McCaffrey is also a household name, and he'll benefit from the league's softest schedule.
- If both Lawrence and Prescott do not qualify, I think McCaffrey is more likely to win than Hutchinson if they both have comparable production for playoff-bound teams.
- **JJ. McCarthy** (+1000) is an X factor in this race, as he probably shouldn't qualify because he missed his entire rookie year due to injury. But if Lawrence and Prescott do not lead playoff-bound teams and McCarthy does, that would create a situation that has not yet happened since I began tracking NFL awards markets over a decade ago.
- **Daniel Jones** (+2000) warrants mentioning, but he'd have to become an entirely different player to lead a team like the Colts to the postseason.

[Aidan Hutchinson](#), [Detroit Lions](#), [Betting](#), [NFL Draft Kit Pro](#), [Ryan Reynolds' Awards Betting Analysis](#)



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