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**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY CONNOR COOK WINS THE
2015 JOHNNY UNITAS GOLDEN ARM AWARD**

BALTIMORE, MD (12/8/15) --- Michigan State Quarterback Connor Cook is the winner of the 2015 Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award®, presented annually by the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Educational Foundation, Inc., and Transamerica®.

Fifth-year senior quarterback Connor Cook, the winningest quarterback in school history, owns a 34-4 record (.895) as the starter, including a 23-2 (.920) mark against Big Ten opponents. The 34 wins are second most among active starting quarterbacks in the NCAA FBS (Stanford's Kevin Hogan with 35), and Cook's .895 winning percentage is No. 1 (minimum 24 starts). Cook is 5-1 against Associated Press Top 10 teams in his career, including 3-0 in 2015, and is 8-3 against AP Top 25 opponents. His 38 career starts are second most in MSU history, trailing only Kirk Cousins, who made 39 career starts from 2009-11.

The Hinckley, Ohio, native Cook is the first Spartan quarterback to win the Big Ten Quarterback of the Year Award since its inception in 2011, and is also the first Spartan QB to be named first-team All-Big Ten since Steve Juday in 1965 and only the fifth ever in school history (Earl Morrall, 1955; James Ninowski, 1957; Dean Look, 1959; Juday, 1965). Cook was a second-team selection in 2013 and 2014.

Cook ranks among the Big Ten leaders in touchdown passes (tied for first with 24), passing efficiency (second with 142.2 rating), passing (third with 243.4 ypg.), and total offense (third with 250.1 ypg.). He became MSU's all-time leader in touchdown passes after throwing four in the Nebraska game on Nov. 7; he has 71 overall (Cousins threw 66 from 2008-11), which is tied for seventh in Big Ten history. Cook has completed 57 percent of his passes (210-of-369) for 2,921 yards, 24 touchdowns and just five interceptions in 2015.

Candidates for the Golden Arm Award – which has been presented at the end of each college football season since 1987 – must be college seniors or fourth-year juniors on schedule to graduate with their class. In addition to the accomplishments on the field, candidates are judged on their character, citizenship, scholastic achievement, and leadership qualities.

Past Golden Arm Award winners include: Peyton Manning (Tennessee, 1997); Carson Palmer (USC, 2002); Eli Manning (Ole Miss, 2003); Matt Ryan (Boston College, 2007); Colt McCoy (Texas, 2009); Andrew Luck (Stanford, 2011) and Marcus Mariota (Oregon, 2014).

The Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Educational Foundation, Inc. has again teamed with longtime partner **Transamerica**, as well as **120 Sports**, a first-of-its-kind live-streaming digital sports video programming network, in promoting this prestigious honor. Transamerica, the presenting sponsor of this award, is proud once again to honor the tremendous legacy of Johnny Unitas® and salute a new generation of outstanding student athletes. In addition to recognizing great accomplishments on the field, the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award® considers character, citizenship, integrity, leadership and honor all characteristics that are highly valued by Transamerica®.

For over a century, Transamerica has been helping people prepare a better financial future as a leading provider of solutions for insurance investments and retirement. Creating a better tomorrow comes from hard work, discipline and commitment to a solid plan. Transamerica Congratulates Connor Cook who has demonstrated a commitment to excellence and worked hard to “Transform Tomorrow” for himself and his team during this season.

Cook will receive the 2015 Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award® at a ceremony to be held this Friday, December 11, 6-9 p.m., at the Embassy Suites Baltimore Inner Harbor & The Grand in downtown Baltimore.

The ceremony will feature remarks by one of Johnny Unitas’ favorite targets during his years with the Baltimore Colts, NFL Hall of Famer Raymond Berry.

Proceeds from the Golden Arm Award help to support the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Educational Foundation. The Foundation provides financial assistance to underprivileged and deserving young scholar-athletes throughout Maryland and Kentucky.

In addition to Transamerica, sponsors of the Golden Arm Award include: 120 Sports, The Babe Ruth and Sports Legends Museum, Baltimore Sun Media Group, Century Engineering, Coach for America, Comcast, Dunbar Cash Management and Dunbar Security Solutions, The Embassy Suites Baltimore Inner Harbor & The Grand, Haddock Investments, Harvey Agency, HMS Insurance Associates, Inc., Metropolis Funding, PSAV, Panini, SILKS, Tray, Inc., The Scott Garceau Show, MedStar Union Memorial Sports Medicine, Wilson Sporting Goods, and ZBest Executive & Global Transportation Services.

To learn more about The Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award® visit:

http://www.transamerica.com/about_us/johnny_unitas_golden_arm_award.asp

<http://www.goldenarmfoundation.com/>

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