

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**NFL ANNOUNCES NOMINEES FOR 2021 PEPSI®
ZERO SUGAR NFL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**

Winner Selected by Fan Vote on [NFL.com/voting/rookies/rookie-of-the-year](https://www.nfl.com/voting/rookies/rookie-of-the-year)

The National Football League today announced the six finalists for the **2021 PEPSI ZERO SUGAR NFL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR** award.

2021 PEPSI ZERO SUGAR NFL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

PLAYER	POSITION	TEAM
Ja'Marr Chase	Wide Receiver	Cincinnati Bengals
Najee Harris	Running Back	Pittsburgh Steelers
Mac Jones	Quarterback	New England Patriots
Micah Parsons	Linebacker	Dallas Cowboys
Kyle Pitts	Tight End	Atlanta Falcons
Jaylen Waddle	Wide Receiver	Miami Dolphins

Through the end of the voting period on January 31, fans will also be able to vote directly on Twitter. To cast such a vote, fans should tweet the first and last name of the player or the player's official Twitter handle. Both of these methods must include the hashtag: #PepsiROY. Voting via Twitter is in addition to the online ballot at [NFL.com/voting/rookies/rookie-of-the-year](https://www.nfl.com/voting/rookies/rookie-of-the-year), which will be available throughout the entire voting period.

The **2021 PEPSI ZERO SUGAR NFL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR** award winner will be recognized in Los Angeles and presented with a specially designed, Pepsi Zero Sugar-themed trophy during Super Bowl LVI festivities.

The six finalists were selected for their outstanding performances through the 2021 NFL season. Each week, six nominees were chosen for the Pepsi Zero Sugar NFL Rookie of the Week and fans voted for the winner on NFL.com. Those results were used to help determine the finalists.

A closer look at the finalists:

- **Cincinnati Bengals wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase** led all rookies and ranked fourth in the NFL with 1,455 receiving yards, the most by a rookie in the Super Bowl era, while his 13 touchdown receptions were the third-most in the league this season. In Week 17, he recorded 266 receiving yards, the most ever by a rookie in a single game. He also recorded 201 receiving yards in Week 7 and became the first rookie ever and the fifth player in the Super Bowl era to record multiple games with at least 200 receiving yards in a single season, joining Pro Football Hall of Famers

CALVIN JOHNSON (2011 & 2012) and **DON MAYNARD** (1968) as well as **JOSH GORDON** (2013) and **ALSHON JEFFERY** (2013). Chase became the fifth rookie in the Super Bowl era with at least 1,000 receiving yards and 10 touchdown receptions, joining Pro Football Hall of Famer **RANDY MOSS** (1998), **ODELL BECKHAM JR.** (2014), **MIKE EVANS** (2014) and **JOHN JEFFERSON** (1978).

- **Pittsburgh Steelers running back Najee Harris** led all rookies and ranked fourth in the league with 1,667 scrimmage yards (1,200 rushing, 467 receiving), the most-ever by a Steelers rookie, and ranked second among rookies with 10 total touchdowns (seven rushing, three receiving). He led all NFL running backs with 74 receptions and in Week 3, totaled 14 receptions to tie **SAQUON BARKLEY** (September 16, 2018) and **ROY HELU** (November 6, 2011) for the most by a rookie running back in a single game all-time.
- **New England Patriots quarterback Mac Jones** led all qualified rookies with a 67.6 completion percentage, 3,801 passing yards, 22 touchdown passes and a 92.5 rating this season. He completed at least 70 percent of his pass attempts in nine games to tie **DAK PRESCOTT** (2016) for the most-ever by rookie. In Week 10, Jones recorded a 142.1 passer rating, the fifth-highest single-game passer rating by a rookie quarterback in the Super Bowl era (minimum 20 attempts). In 2021, he became the third rookie quarterback all-time to win each of his first six road starts, joining Prescott (2016) and **BEN ROETHLISBERGER** (2004).
- **Dallas Cowboys linebacker Micah Parsons** led all rookies with 13 sacks in 2021, the third-most by a rookie since the individual sack became an official statistic in 1982, and tied for the NFL-lead with 21 tackles for loss. From Week 9 to 14, he registered a sack in six consecutive games and became the third rookie to record a sack in six-or-more consecutive games since 1982, joining **JEVON KEARSE** (eight consecutive games in 1999) and **MIKE CROEL** (six in 1991). He finished the season with three forced fumbles and became the first rookie since **DWIGHT FREENEY** (13 sacks, nine forced fumbles) in 2002 with at least 13 sacks and three forced fumbles.
- **Atlanta Falcons tight end Kyle Pitts** totaled 1,026 receiving yards this season and joined Pro Football Hall of Famer **MIKE DITKA** (1,076 receiving yards in 1961) as the only rookie tight ends in NFL history with at least 1,000 receiving yards. He registered 68 receptions and became the third rookie tight end all-time with at least 65 receptions, joining **KEITH JACKSON** (81 receptions in 1988) and **JEREMY SHOCKEY** (74 in 2002). Pitts, who recorded 119 receiving yards in Week 5, 163 receiving yards in Week 7 and 102 receiving yards in Week 16, became the third rookie tight end in league history with 100 receiving yards in at least three games, joining Ditka (five games in 1961) and **CHARLE YOUNG** (four games in 1973).
- **Miami Dolphins wide receiver Jaylen Waddle** led all rookies with 104 receptions this season, surpassing **ANQUAN BOLDIN** (101 receptions in 2003) for the most receptions by a rookie all-time. He recorded seven games with at least eight receptions, the most such games by a rookie in NFL history, and his 10 games with at least five catches were the most among rookies this season. Waddle totaled 1,015 receiving yards and was one of three rookies, along with Chase and Pitts, to reach the 1,000-yard mark in 2021.

This is Pepsi's 21st year as the official soft drink sponsor of the NFL and the 20th year that Pepsi will present the NFL Rookie of the Week and NFL Rookie of the Year award.

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About PepsiCo:

PepsiCo products are enjoyed by consumers more than one billion times a day in more than 200 countries and territories around the world. PepsiCo generated more than \$70 billion in net revenue in 2020, driven by a complementary food and beverage portfolio that includes Frito-Lay, Gatorade, Pepsi-Cola, Quaker Tropicana, and SodaStream. PepsiCo's product portfolio includes a wide range of enjoyable foods and

beverages, including 23 brands that generate more than \$1 billion each in estimated annual retail sales. Guiding PepsiCo is our vision to Be the Global Leader in Convenient Foods and Beverages by Winning with Purpose. "Winning with Purpose" reflects our ambition to win sustainably in the marketplace and embed purpose into all aspects of our business strategy and brands. For more information, visit www.pepsico.com.

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