

Kimbrough, McCray on Buchanan Watch List

Written by Mike Flynn
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Appalachian State University seniors Jeremy Kimbrough (Decatur, Ga./Cedar Grove) and Demetrius McCray (Covington, Ga./Newton) are among 20 players on the initial watch list for the 2012 Buck Buchanan Award, The Sports Network announced on Thursday. The Buchanan Award is presented annually to the nation's top NCAA Division I FCS defensive player. Kimbrough is returning for his third season as Appalachian State's starting middle linebacker in 2012. The 5-11, 240-pounder led Appalachian and ranked fifth in the Southern Conference a year ago with 105 tackles and received a slew of all-America honors, including second-team recognition from The Sports Network. He also finished eighth in the SoCon with 12 tackles for loss and tied for 11th with four sacks, making him one of only two players to finish among the league's top 11 in tackles, tackles for loss and sacks in 2011.

McCray led the SoCon and tied for eighth nationally with five interceptions in his first season as a full-time starter in 2011, en route to fourth-team all-America accolades from Phil Steele Publications. The 6-0, 185-pounder also tied for 12th nationally with 14 passes defended as a junior and ranked fifth on the Mountaineers with 48 tackles from his right cornerback position. Mountaineers have been constants in the race for the Buck Buchanan Award since its inception in 1995. Appalachian linebacker Dexter Coakley won the first two Buchanan Awards in 1995 and '96 and remains the only two-time winner of the award. Since 2000, Mountaineers have been Buchanan Award finalists 13 times, most recently in 2010 when Jabari Fletcher, D.J. Smith and Mark LeGree placed seventh, eighth and 17th in voting for the award.

Appalachian is the only program that boasts two candidates on the initial watch list for the 2012 Buchanan Award. The winner is selected by a panel of 175 voters nationwide and will be presented at The Sports Network FCS Awards Presentation in January in Frisco, Texas.

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Photo Courtesy: Jeremy Kimbrough and Demetrius McCray, ASU Athletics