

FORMER MICHIGAN TIGHT END AND 2016 JOHN MACKEY AWARD WINNER

JAKE BUTT JOINS JOHN MACKEY AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE



Former Michigan All-American joins a player-led committee built to identify the most complete tight end in college football—looking beyond the box score at the versatility, toughness and selflessness the position demands.

BALTIMORE, MD — August 10, 2026 — The John Mackey Award announced today that 2016 recipient and former Michigan All-American tight end Jake Butt has joined its selection committee, bringing the perspective of a former winner and one of college football's most accomplished tight ends to the process of selecting the nation's most outstanding player at the position.

Butt's addition is part of a renewed vision for the John Mackey Award as it enters its 26th season: building a player-led selection process capable of evaluating the qualities of a great tight end that statistics alone cannot capture.

“We want our committee looking beyond receptions, yards, and touchdowns to identify not simply the most productive tight end in college football, but the most complete one.”

— Benjamin Hazel, Executive Director, John Mackey Award

FROM MACKEY AWARD WINNER TO MACKEY AWARD VOTER

Butt knows firsthand what it means to receive the honor he will now help determine. As a four-year letterman and Michigan team captain, he finished his career with program records for receptions and receiving yards by a tight end, recording **138 receptions for 1,646 yards**. His senior season culminated with the 2016 John Mackey Award.

“I was lucky to experience a number of great honors and memorable moments, but WINNING THE JOHN MACKEY AWARD MY SENIOR YEAR WAS ONE OF THE GREATEST.”

“To be selected as ‘the best at your position in all of college football’ is every player’s dream. Now, I’m excited to take on an even greater and more important honor—helping select the next generation of winners.”

— Jake Butt, 2016 John Mackey Award Winner

Butt believes today's tight ends should be evaluated against the standard established at the highest level of the sport. The position demands players contribute as receivers while also working alongside the offensive line in run blocking and pass protection.

“The tight end position has never been valued higher than what we see today.”

“We’ve seen greats in the NFL like Travis Kelce and George Kittle lead the league in receiving while also needing to be involved with the offensive line in run blocking and pass protection,” Butt said. “My goal is to hold the great college players of today’s game to the same standard the best in the NFL are held to.”

That standard extends beyond Saturdays. Butt said candidates should be expected to “do a little bit of everything,” including making an impact in the community and classroom.

“Thankfully, we have plenty of special young men to choose from, and I look forward to a fun season here in 2026.”

VERSATILITY • PHYSICALITY • INTELLIGENCE • TOUGHNESS • SELFLESSNESS

ABOUT THE JOHN MACKEY AWARD

Established in 2000, the John Mackey Award annually recognizes the most outstanding collegiate tight end while preserving the legacy of Pro Football Hall of Famer John Mackey, one of the most influential players to ever play the position.

As the Award enters its 26th season, its renewed selection process places an emphasis on evaluating the complete tight end—recognizing not only statistical production, but also the blocking, versatility, leadership, and team-first contributions that define excellence at the position. The John Mackey Award is a proud member of the NCFAA, which encompasses 25 of the most prestigious awards in college football, dating back to 1935.

Recognizing Excellence. Inspiring the Future.

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