



News from

The Gridiron Club of Greater Boston

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Walker Harris from Wesleyan University Named Winner of 20th Joe Concannon Award by Gridiron Club of Greater Boston

Outpolls five other outstanding finalists representing UNE, Franklin Pierce, Trinity, Fitchburg State and New England College in balloting for best American-born Division II/III college hockey player in New England

BOSTON – March 19, 2020 – [Gridiron Club of Greater Boston](http://www.gridclubofgreaterboston.com) president **Cheryl Duddy Schoenfeld** announced today that senior forward [Walker Harris](#) from **Wesleyan University** is the winner of the [20th Joe Concannon Award](#), presented annually to the best American-born college hockey player in New England at the Division-II/III level.

The Joe Concannon Award was established in 2001 shortly after the passing of the longtime writer for *The Boston Globe*, who had a great passion for the game of college hockey while always advocating strongly for amateur athletics.

Harris, a senior from Boulder, CO, led the Cardinals in scoring with 13 goals and 20 assists for 33 points. Wesleyan finished 15-11-1 and won its first-ever NESCAC title and first berth in the NCAA tournament. From the final weekend of the regular season with home-and-home games against Trinity through three playoff games as the visiting team, Harris paced the Cardinal offense with five goals and six assists for 11 points. In the 7-2 championship win over Trinity, Harris had a goal and three assists.

During Harris' four years at Wesleyan, he played in 105 games and posted 50 goals and 58 assists for 108 points. While the numbers are impressive, it is his leadership, exemplary sportsmanship and 200-foot game that separates him from other players.

"This is terrific news for Walker and our team," said Wesleyan head coach [Chris Potter](#). "It is gratifying to see all his hard work recognized with such an award. He does so much for this team in all facets of the game including the power play and leading the penalty kill. He is a key face-off guy for us and as captain has always led by example on the ice in practice and games."

Harris was also recognized by the [New England Small College Athletic Conference \(NESCAC\)](#) as a first team all-star by the league coaches.

"Walker just has been the heart and soul of this team," stated Potter. "He is one of those players that you never truly replace on the roster and his impact will carry forward with next year's team as he has influenced the current roster with his character and dedication. I know he has interest in playing at the next level and believe he will be successful based on those same characteristics."

Harris topped five outstanding finalists in the balloting. Each had impactful seasons on the ice, and all were worthy candidates, heavily considered for the award. They are, in alphabetical order:

[Ryan Bloom \(Northville, MI\)](#) – The senior forward from **University of New England** finished the season among the nation's leaders in points per game with 14 goals and 22 assists for 36 points in 26 games played. Bloom was the CCC Player of the Year for the second time and a first team all-star. He finished his career at UNE having played playing in 110 games and posting 75 goals and 94 assists for 169 total points.

[Carlos Fornaris \(Miami, FL\)](#) – The senior forward from **New England College** was an NEHC first-team all-conference pick and among the nation's leading point-getters. Fornaris recorded 9 goals and 33 assists for 42 points in leading NEC to a fourth place finish and home-ice playoff berth in the ultra-competitive NEHC. His four-year stats include 27 goals and 98 assists for 125 points in 103 games played.

[Barclay Gammill \(Biddeford, ME\)](#) – The senior forward from **Trinity** was a key contributor in the Bantams' offense, posting 36 points on 18 goals and 18 assists. He was a first team all-star in NESCAC and earned Player of the Year honors. For his career, Gammill finished with 103 games played, scoring 44 goals and adding 45 assists for 89 career points.

[Alex Lester \(Methuen, MA\)](#) – The senior forward from **Franklin Pierce** was an NE-10 first team all-star and the Conference Player of the Year while recording 18 goals and 22 assists for 40 points in 32 games played. Lester led the Ravens to the NE-10 championship game where they lost to Stonehill, 3-1. He leaves FPU with an impressive four-year career having played 107 games and compiling 102 points on 45 goals and 57 assists.

Brian McGrath (Worcester, MA) – The junior goaltender from **Fitchburg State** was MASCAC Player and Goaltender of the Year and first team all-star, leading the Falcons to a second-place finish in the regular season. Among the leading goalies in the country, McGrath finished the season with a 2.05 goals-against average, .942 save percentage, and four shutouts.

“It is important in these uncertain times and unforeseen circumstances with the current pandemic to focus on some of the recent good things and achievements for a hockey season that ended abruptly for all of the institutions, players, coaches and fans,” said Gridiron Club Hockey Awards Committee chairman **Tim Costello**. “Walker and the finalists are among a great group of their peers who played outstanding hockey throughout the year and will not be able to finish the season on the ice where their ultimate aspirations committed their dedication and pursuit of excellence.”

“The 2019-20 season will be forever remembered as the year of the pandemic and a year without champions. With public health and safety of utmost importance, these season-ending cancellations are understood for greater good but difficult to process nonetheless. It is important, this year more than most, that we do recognize the excellence for Walker and the finalists and look forward to resuming a normal life and hockey as part of it next season.”

The Joe Concannon Award is anticipated to be presented at the New England College Hockey Writers’ Brunch currently still scheduled for Sunday, May 3 at the Prince Restaurant in Saugus, MA.

Joe Concannon Award Winners

2001	Keith Aucoin	Norwich University
2002	Michael Carosi	Bowdoin College
2003	Nick Stauder	Salem State College
2004	Jim Pancyzkowski	Wesleyan University
	Michael O’Sullivan	Curry College
2005	Brian Doherty	Curry College
	Joseph Ori	Trinity College
2006	Adam Dann	Bowdoin College
2007	Greg Osborne	Colby College
2008	Tom Maldonado	Middlebury College
2009	Jeff Landers	Amherst College
2010	Coleman Noonan	St. Anselm College
2011	Josh Harris	Castleton College
2012	Jeremiah Ketts	Johnson & Wales University
2013	Colin Mulvey	Norwich University
2014	Jackson Brewer	Trinity College
2015	Jamie Murray	Babson College
2016	Jamie Murray	Babson College
2017	Brady Fleurent	University of New England
2018	Colin Larkin	Massachusetts-Boston
2019	Brady Fleurent	University of New England
2020	Walker Harris	Wesleyan University

The Joe Concannon Award

The Gridiron Club established the Joe Concannon Award in 2001 to honor Joe, a lifelong devotee of college hockey, former member of the Walter Brown Award Selection Committee and, as a journalist, a staunch advocate for the amateur athletes he knew and covered. A native of Litchfield, Connecticut, Joe graduated from Boston University in 1961. He served as sports information director (SID) at Holy Cross before joining the *Boston Globe* in the late 1960’s to cover college sports. Joe declined frequent invitations by his editors to write about Boston’s major professional sports teams, preferring to concentrate on the colleges, distance running and golf. He wrote the book *Marathoning with Bill Rodgers* and established the highly successful Litchfield Road Race in his hometown. Joe was a world traveler and was especially proud of his Irish heritage, frequently sojourning to the Emerald Isle. He passed away in 2000.

2019-2020 Gridiron Club Hockey Awards Selection Committee and Advisory Board: Tim Costello, Chairman; Joe Bertagna, Tom Burke, Jim Connelly, Ned Cully, Dick DeCaprio, Bob DeGregorio, Kevin Fleming, Steve Hagwell, John Powers, Paul McNamara, Richard Umile, Michael McShane and William J. Stewart III.

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