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The Gridiron Club of Greater Boston

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Gridiron Club of Greater Boston Announces 20 Semi-Finalists for 63rd Walter Brown Award

Slate of American-born Division One hockey players in New England includes 12 from Hockey East, six from ECAC, two from Atlantic Hockey

BOSTON – February 4, 2015 – [Gridiron Club of Greater Boston](http://www.gridclubofgreaterboston.com) president Bob Norton announced today that 20 NCAA Division One players are semifinalists for the 63rd [Walter Brown Award](#), presented annually to the best American-born college hockey player in New England.

The nation's oldest nationally-recognized college hockey honor, the Walter Brown Award was established in 1953 by the members of the 1933 Massachusetts Rangers, the first American team ever to win the World Championship Tournament. Brown coached the Rangers to the title in Prague, Czechoslovakia, that year; the team defeated Canada 2-1 in overtime in the championship game.

Fourteen teams are represented in the slate of candidates that includes 12 players from [Hockey East](#), six from [ECAC Hockey](#), and two from [Atlantic Hockey](#). The slate comprises 11 forwards, four goalies, and five defensemen. Boston University is the only team with three nominees. Harvard, Providence, UMass-Lowell and Quinnipiac each have two.

Atlantic Hockey's semifinalists are Bentley University senior defenseman [Steve Weinstein](#) and American International College sophomore forward [Austin Orszulak](#). Weinstein has three goals and 15 assists in 19 games to date. Orszulak has 18 goals and 9 assists.

In **Hockey East**, Boston University, Boston College, UMass-Lowell and Providence are the top four teams in the league standings at present. They have a total of eight Walter Brown Award semifinalists among them. Terriers' freshman center [Jack Eichel](#) leads Hockey East in scoring with 15 goals and 25 assists for 40 points in all games played. His linemate, junior [Danny O'Regan](#), leads the league in goals with 18. Junior defenseman [Matt Grzelcyk](#) is BU's captain and team leader and has 1-17-18 to date.

Boston College sophomore goalie [Thatcher Demko](#) has been the key to the stout Eagle defense, posting a 2.12 goals-against average thus far. Lowell freshman [C.J. Smith](#) leads his team in scoring with 12-12-24, while sophomore defenseman [Dylan Zink](#) has 8-10-18. Providence junior goalie [Jon Gillies](#) has posted a 2.08 average thus far. Junior forward [Trevor Mingoia](#) leads the Friars in scoring with 13-11-24.

Hockey East's other semifinalists are Vermont senior defenseman [Mike Paliotta](#), second in team scoring at 7-16-23; UMass sophomore forward [Frank Vatrano](#), team scoring leader with 14-9-23; Connecticut sophomore goalie [Rob Nichols](#), with a 2.32 goals-against average thus far; and New Hampshire sophomore forward [Tyler Kelleher](#), the team's leading scorer with 9-17-26.

In the **ECAC**, Quinnipiac sophomore forward [Sam Anas](#) paces the first-place Bobcats in scoring with 16-14-30. Senior defenseman [Danny Federico](#) leads the rearguard contingent and has compiled seven assists. One big reason for Harvard's rebound to prominence has been the performances of junior linemates [Jimmy Vesey](#) and [Kyle Criscuolo](#). Vesey leads the team in scoring with 18-16-34 while Criscuolo has 12-18-30.

Yale sophomore goaltender [Alex Lyon](#) currently ranks third in the nation with a 1.59 goals-against average and a .941 save percentage. Dartmouth senior forward [Eric Robinson](#) is enjoying a fine season with 6-10-16 to date.

Four of this year's Walter Brown Award semifinalists are repeat nominees from last year: O'Regan, Vesey, Weinstein, and Anas. Grzelcyk and Gillies were both semifinalists in 2013.

“Competition throughout the East has been particularly spirited and intense this season. Many individual players are having superb years. That’s the main reason that the committee expanded its roster of semifinalists from 16 to 20. Still, there were more than a few others who have played well enough to be on the list,” said Gridiron Club Hockey Awards Committee chairman **Tim Costello**.

The Gridiron Club will announce the finalists and winner of the 63rd Walter Brown Award in March, following league playoffs and before the start of NCAA Tournament play. The award will be presented to the winner at the New England College Hockey Writers’ Dinner in April.

Walter Brown Award Winners

1953	Ray Picard	Northeastern	1986	Scott Fusco	Harvard
1954	Bob Babine	Boston College		Scott Harlow	Boston College
1955	Bill Cleary	Harvard	1987	Brian Leetch	Boston College
1956	R.J. Cavanaugh	Northeastern	1988	Mike McHugh	Maine
1957	Bob Cleary	Harvard	1989	Lane MacDonald	Harvard
1958	Bob Cleary	Harvard	1990	Greg Brown	Boston College
1959	Mike Karin	Middlebury	1991	Dave Emma	Boston College
1960	Art Chisholm	Northeastern	1992	Rob Gaudreau	Providence
1961	Tom Martin	Boston College	1993	Dave Sacco	Boston University
1962	Dave Grannis	Harvard	1994	Jacques Joubert	Boston University
1963	Bill Hogan	Boston College	1995	Mike Grier	Boston University
1964	Richie Green	Boston University	1996	Jay Pandolfo	Boston University
1965	Bob Gaudreau	Brown	1997	Chris Drury	Boston University
1966	John Cunniff	Boston College	1998	Chris Drury	Boston University
1967	Jerry York	Boston College	1999	Mike Mottau	Boston College
1968	Tim Sheehy	Boston College		Mike Omicioli	Providence
1969	Paul Hurley	Boston College	2000	Mike Mottau	Boston College
1970	Tim Sheehy	Boston College	2001	Ty Conklin	New Hampshire
1971	Joe Cavanagh	Harvard		Brian Gionta	Boston College
1972	Bob McManama	Harvard	2002	Jim Fahey	Northeastern
1973	Tom Mellor	Boston College	2003	Mike Ayers	New Hampshire
1974	Ed Walsh	Boston University	2004	Steve Saviano	New Hampshire
1975	Ron Wilson	Providence	2005	Dov Grumet-Morris	Harvard
1976	Richie Smith	Boston College	2006	Chris Collins	Boston College
1977	Bob Miller	New Hampshire	2007	John Curry	Boston University
1978	Joe Mullen	Boston College	2008	Kevin Regan	New Hampshire
1979	Ralph Cox	New Hampshire	2009	Matt Gilroy	Boston University
1980	Bill Army	Boston College	2010	Bobby Butler	New Hampshire
1981	Mark Switaj	Boston College	2011	John Muse	Boston College
1982	Chuck Marshall	Northeastern	2012	Brett Gensler	Bentley University
1983	Mark Fusco	Harvard	2013	Steve Whitney	Boston College
1984	Cleon Daskalakis	Boston University	2014	Johnny Gaudreau	Boston College
1985	Tim Army	Providence			

The Walter Brown Award

Commemorating the life and works of America’s greatest sportsman, the Walter Brown Award is given annually to the outstanding American-born college hockey player in New England. The Walter Brown Award is the oldest nationally recognized honor accorded to individual players in the sport of American college hockey. Brown coached the United States to its first world hockey championship in 1933. The U.S. team, the Massachusetts Rangers, comprised players from Boston College, Boston University, Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Notre Dame, and Boston Commerce High School. The Americans defeated the Toronto National Sea Fleas, coached by Harold Ballard, 2-1 in overtime in the final game of the 1933 World Tournament at Prague, Czechoslovakia. It was also America’s first win over a team from Canada and the first loss ever suffered by the Canadians in international play. The U.S. team members established the Walter Brown award at their 20th reunion in 1953. Criteria for the selection committee include leadership, character, sportsmanship, and ability as well as on-ice achievement. The Gridiron Club of Greater Boston has been the steward of the Walter Brown Award since 1977.

2014-2015 Gridiron Club of Greater Boston Officers: Bob Norton, President; Jim Kearney, First Vice President; Tom Lamb, Second Vice President; Dick Lawrence, Secretary/Treasurer.

2014-2015 Gridiron Club Hockey Awards Selection Committee and Advisory Board: Tim Costello, Chairman; Joe Bertagna, Tom Burke, Jim Connelly, Ned Cully, Bob DeGregorio, Kevin Fleming, Steve Hagwell, Nancy Marrapese-Burrell, Hon. Gordon A. Martin, Jr., Paul McNamara, and William J. Stewart III.

Press Contacts: Tim Costello, Committee Chairman Phone: 732-425-5922
Tom Burke, Communications Director Phone: 617-323-5694

Tim.costello@ymail.com
tomburke99@aol.com