



For Immediate Release

2018 Players Choice Awards Comeback Player Finalists

Michael Brantley, Edwin Jackson and David Price are selected as finalists by AL players; Clay Buchholz, Matt Kemp and Miles Mikolas are NL finalists

NEW YORK, Oct. 16 – Players selected Michael Brantley, Edwin Jackson and David Price as finalists in the American League and Clay Buchholz, Matt Kemp and Miles Mikolas in the National League in voting for Comeback Player honors in the 2018 Players Choice Awards.

Winners of the AL and NL Comeback Player awards receive grants of \$20,000 each from the Major League Baseball Players Trust to direct to a charity or their choice, while the second-place finishers receive \$10,000 grants and third-place finishers \$5,000.

All told, the 2018 Players Choice Award winners will designate charities to receive grants totaling \$320,000 from the Major League Baseball Players Trust. Since 1992, the Players Trust has recognized the outstanding on- and off-field performances of Players Choice Awards winners by contributing more than \$4 million to charities around the world.

Additionally, the 2018 Player of the Year and Marvin Miller will receive a \$50,000 grant and the eight league-wide Players Choice Award winners will receive grants of \$20,000 each. Runners-up in all categories receive \$10,000 and third-place finishers \$5,000.

Through their collective charity, players pool resources to support efforts that provide hope, sustainability and lasting change around the world. Players direct grants to the wide range of causes they support – from disaster relief to health and human services to growing baseball in the United States and abroad.

Players Choice Awards voting among all players was conducted in mid-September by the accounting firm KPMG. Winners will be announced on the evening of Nov. 27.

American League Finalists

Michael Brantley's great 2018 season wasn't the best of his 10 years in the majors, but it might have been the most satisfying. After a 2015 shoulder injury required surgery and caused him to miss all but 11 games in 2016, then suffering a severe ankle injury in August 2017 that kept him out of the lineup for much of the second half, he played 143 games and slashed .309/.364/.468 with 17 home runs and 36 doubles this season. The 31-year-old Brantley was also selected for the All-Star Game for the third time in his career.



David Price returned to form for the Red Sox this season after being limited to 74 2/3 innings with an elbow injury in a frustrating 2017. He got stronger as the 2018 season went on, going 16-7 with a 3.58 ERA over 176 innings in 30 starts, including a 6-1 record with a 2.25 ERA in the second half, to help lead the Red Sox to the AL East title. The 33-year-old left-hander averaged 9.1 strikeouts per nine innings and had a 3.54 strikeout-to-walk ratio.

Signing with Oakland on June 6, five days after being released by the Nationals, **Edwin Jackson** made his first start later that month and helped spark the upstart A's to a second-place finish in the AL West and a wild card berth. Jackson was 6-3 with a 3.33 ERA over 17 starts and 92 innings while adding 16 years of big-league experience to the clubhouse. Pitching for the 13th team of his career, the 35-year-old Jackson's fastball still was in the 93 to 95 mph range and he notched the 100th win of his career.

National League Finalists

Clay Buchholz, a two-time all-star, pitched just 7 1/3 innings with the Phillies in 2017 before suffering a tear in his right flexor tendon and undergoing surgery. After rehabbing through the winter, he signed a minor-league deal with the Royals in mid-March, but he opted out on May 1 and signed another minor-league contract with the Diamondbacks, who brought him to the majors two weeks later. The 34-year-old righthander went 7-2 with a 2.01 ERA over 98 1/3 innings for the D-backs while striking out 81 and holding opponents to a .220 batting average.

After going 4-6 with a 5.38 ERA over 90 1/3 innings in his first three Major League seasons for the Padres and Rangers, **Miles Mikolas** was released by Texas in 2014 and signed with the Yomiuri Giants in Japan for whom he went 31–13 with a 2.18 ERA in 62 starts over his three seasons to rejuvenate his career. Returning to the Majors in 2018, Mikolas was the Cardinals' most consistent and productive starter, including winning his final five games. The 30-year-old righthander used a variety of looks and strong command to tie Jon Lester and Max Scherzer for a league-leading 18 wins with a 2.83 ERA and 1.07 WHIP over 200 2/3 innings.

Returning to the Dodgers, for whom he played the first nine seasons of his 13-year big-league career, **Matt Kemp** wasn't a lock to make the Opening Day roster, but he ended up playing a key role in helping lead Los Angeles to the NL West title in 2018, batting .290 with 21 homers, 85 RBIs with a .338 on-base average and .481 slugging percentage over 146 games. Kemp, who drove in his 1,000th run on his 34th birthday (Sept. 23), got off to hot start and reached the All-Star Game for the third time in his career and first time since 2012 while adjusting to more of a platoon role than he had been accustomed over his stellar career.



About the Major League Baseball Players Trust

Through the Players Trust, Major Leaguers contribute their time, money and celebrity to call attention to important causes. Each year the Players Trust distributes more than \$1.5 million in annual grants and programs. For additional information, please visit www.PlayersTrust.org, [@MLBPlayersTrust](https://twitter.com/MLBPlayersTrust).

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