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## **COLLEGE FOOTBALL SENSATIONS HIGHLIGHT NOMINEES FOR ROSE BOWL GAME ALL-CENTURY CLASS OF 2000**

**PASADENA, Calif.** – Brian Cushing, Matt Leinart and Vince Young have been nominated as finalists for the Rose Bowl Game All-Century Class as representatives from the 2000's. The candidates, as voted by an esteemed panel from the Football Writers Association of America (FWAA), are the tenth of a series of names that will be unveiled each Sunday throughout the remainder of the college football regular season.

In commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Rose Bowl Game, the All-Century Class will highlight and honor great players and coaches throughout the history of *The Granddaddy of Them All*.

As one of just two players to ever start in four Rose Bowl Games, Brian Cushing led the Trojans to a 3-1 record at *The Granddaddy of Them All*. As a 2005 freshman All-American, Cushing's Trojans lost the only Rose Bowl Game he played in to Texas, 41-38. In 2006, he earned All-Pac-10 Second Team honors and Player of the Game honors for his performance in the 2007 Rose Bowl Game. He guided the Trojan defense with seven tackles, including four for loss and 2.5 sacks, as they beat Michigan, 32-18. In the 2008 Rose Bowl Game, the Trojans rolled past Illinois, 49-17, and Cushing had one tackle, one pass deflection, and a fumble recovery that led to a Trojan touchdown. Cushing closed out his career in the 2009 Rose Bowl Game against Penn State, leading the team with seven tackles and half a sack. He was named First-Team All-American by several publications and selected All-Pac-10 First-Team as a senior.

Matt Leinart led the No. 1-ranked USC Trojans to the AP national championship by defeating the University of Michigan in the 2004 Rose Bowl Game. He was named Player of the Game after going 23-of-34 for 327 yards, throwing three touchdowns and catching a touchdown of his own. After winning the Heisman Trophy in 2004, the Trojans returned to the Rose Bowl Game in 2006 to play the Texas Longhorns for the national championship. Despite a losing effort, Leinart went 29-of-40 for a touchdown and 365 yards. It marked just the second loss in his 39 career starts. Leinart finished his college career with 807 completions on 1,245 attempts (64.8% completion percentage) for 10,693 yards and 99 touchdowns with just 23 interceptions. He is USC's all-time leader in career touchdown passes and completion percentage, and is second in completions and yardage.

Texas quarterback Vince Young ran his way to Player of the Game honors in the 2005 Rose Bowl Game, tying the record for touchdowns responsible for with five (four rushing, one passing). He also ran for 192 yards and passed for 180 more. His two 4<sup>th</sup> quarter touchdown runs helped overcome a 10-point deficit and earned Texas a win against the Michigan Wolverines. The Longhorns returned to Pasadena for the 2006 Rose Bowl Game and national championship where Young managed to best his performance from the year before. In arguably one of the best games and performances in college football history, Young ran for 200 yards, threw for 267 yards, and set the record for total yards. He ran for three touchdowns, including the last two scores of the game, leading the Longhorns past the USC Trojans, 41-38. Young earned Player of the Game honors, becoming just the fourth player in the history of the Rose Bowl Game to earn that honor twice.

The FWAA voting committee will select one Rose Bowl Game representative from each decade to comprise the All-Century Class. In addition, one overall player and one overall coach will be highlighted at a press conference on Selection Sunday, which will take place on December 8, 2013, in Pasadena.

For more information on the 100<sup>th</sup> Rose Bowl Game, please visit [www.tournamentofroses.com](http://www.tournamentofroses.com).

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