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Hobey Hat Trick Announced

The Hobey Baker Memorial Award Foundation on Thursday announced the three Hobey Hat Trick finalists for the 2012 Hobey Baker Memorial Award, honoring college hockey's top player. Alphabetically, they are: **Spencer Abbott**, senior forward from the University of Maine; **Jack Connolly**, senior forward from the University of Minnesota-Duluth; and **Austin Smith**, senior forward from Colgate University.

The three finalists were selected from the initial list of Top Ten candidates by the 23-member Selection Committee and an additional round of online fan balloting to determine this year's Hobey Baker winner. Criteria for the award includes: displaying outstanding skills in all phases of the game, strength of character on and off the ice, sportsmanship and scholastic achievements.

This year's Hobey Baker Award winner will be announced Friday, April 6, 2012 from MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, FL during the NCAA Frozen Four. The 32nd annual announcement will be aired live on the NHL Network at 6:00 p.m., ET, and at the Hobey website, www.hobeybakeraward.com. Here is more on this year's three finalists:

Spencer Abbott – University of Maine, Senior, Forward, Hamilton, Ontario
From a recruited walk-on four years ago to a finalist for the Hobey Baker Award, Spencer Abbott has had a remarkable four-year collegiate career. Already recognized as the Player of the Year in Hockey East as well as a First Team all-star, the Black Bear assistant captain leads the nation in scoring and in assists. In 39 games this season, Abbott scored 21 goals, assisted on another 41 for 62 total points. His unselfish scoring exploits earned him the conference scoring title and he was named player of the month twice while piling up 18 multiple-point games. Abbott is a Family Relations major and has been on the Dean's List three times. Spencer is active in the community helping with Special Olympics, assisting at youth hockey clinics and participating in charity games. Abbott, a pro hockey free agent, just signed a contract with the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Jack Connolly – University of Minnesota-Duluth, Senior, Forward, Duluth, Minnesota
A repeat Hobey top ten finalist, the Bulldog captain had a fantastic season winning the WCHA scoring title, being named a First Team all-star for the third straight season and capped it off as the league's Player of the Year. A two-time All American, Connolly is second in the nation in points and assists accumulating 20 goals and 40 assists for 60 points in 41 games. Duluth was the second highest scoring team in the nation this past season and Connolly never missed a college game, having played in 164 straight. He was held pointless in consecutive games only twice in his illustrious four-year career. The

hometown hero is active in community endeavors helping with trash clean-up in the Adopt-A-Highway program, visiting Duluth hospitals, volunteering with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and working with various cancer fund-raisers. He's a Communications major with a 3.3 GPA. He is a pro hockey free agent. Hockey runs deep in the Connolly family as Jack's older brother Chris, was the captain and second leading scorer for Boston University this past season.

Austin Smith – Colgate University, Senior, Forward, Dallas, Texas

Austin Smith completes the trifecta of Hobey scoring whizzes as the nation's top sniper with 36 goals to go along with 21 assists for 57 total points, third best in the country. Dangerous at all times, Smith leads the nation in short-handed goals with six and scored seven power play goals as well. Winning the ECAC scoring title this past season, Smith was named the conference Player of the Year and a First Team all-star. Along the way, Smith scored 30 goals this season faster than any college player in the last 12 years and is currently third in the nation with a plus-25. A Sociology and Anthropology major, Smith helps out with the Hamilton, NY Food Cupboard, assists with food and toy drives during the season and is involved with the local Goals for Good program. He is a fifth round draft pick of the Dallas Stars.

For more information on the Hobey Baker Memorial Award or to access the Hobey logo visit www.hobeybakeraward.com or on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/TheHobey