

**adidas Signs University of Washington’s Michael Penix Jr., Rome Odunze as First NIL Football Athletes, Celebrates Investment in College Sports**

* *Michael Penix Jr. and Rome Odunze are the first student-athletes to sign Name, Image and Likeness deals with the brand from a football program*
* *New signings build on its ongoing investment in college sports, university partners and fans*

**Portland, OR (Oct. 3, 2023)** – adidas today announces the signing of Michael Penix Jr. and Rome Odunze to the brand’s growing Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) roster, marking the brand’s first football student-athletes. Today’s signing reflects a continued commitment by adidas to supporting student-athletes and empowering the next generation of athletes.

“I couldn’t be happier to be teaming up with the adidas family, I’ve been in the three stripes my entire college career and their support has meant a lot to me. I’m excited about this unique opportunity to help further the brand and I’m appreciative of their investment in my university, my teammates, and myself,” said **Heisman contender Michael Penix Jr.** “adidas has shown that they’re committed to student-athletes across the country and I’m thankful to be a part of their commitment.”   
  
In contention for the Heisman Trophy, Washington Huskies quarterback Penix Jr. is one of four captains for the program, with 16 touchdowns and 1,999 passing yards in just five games this season. Last season, he was the nation’s (FBS) leader in passing yards per game (357.0) and was subsequently named the Associated Press Comeback Player of the Year and placed on the All-Pac-12 Second Team.

Washington Huskies wide receiver Odunze joins the adidas family as one of Washington’s captains, having led the Pac-12 in receiving yards last season (1,145) and earning a place on the All-Pac-12 First Team. Ahead of the 2023 season, he was named to AP’s Preseason All-America First Team and a flurry of other preseason recognitions.

“It’s an honor to be joining the adidas family as one of the brand’s first football NIL athletes,” said **Rome Odunze**. “adidas is committed to empowering me to shape my brand and my future, and I’m looking forward to inspiring the next generation of athletes.”

Both athletes will proudly represent the three stripes and participate in brand marketing campaigns.

adidas’ partnership with the University of Washington dates back to 2019 and includes efforts to invest in student-athletes across all sports while also creating programs that increase representation and visibility for a more equitable future in [sport](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnews.adidas.com%2FTags%3Ftags%3DSport&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cc2693bdedc64452af21d08dbc46d492f%7C069bd72b74bb43d09c02547d01f64e6f%7C0%7C0%7C638319745894157381%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ErO8fduRyLeuhqRMwft%2B2KyT807iEXzA8TO%2FJW9D%2BOw%3D&reserved=0). Penix Jr. and Odunze aren’t the first Huskies to join the adidas family, with [softball](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnews.adidas.com%2FTags%3Ftags%3DSoftball&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cc2693bdedc64452af21d08dbc46d492f%7C069bd72b74bb43d09c02547d01f64e6f%7C0%7C0%7C638319745894157381%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Dgn%2BhkhyMxsyChBlpwYPi4o0CRl3NZaQJlip5%2BSo6TA%3D&reserved=0) star **Kinsey Fiedler** joining in 2022.

Student-athletes at Washington are also able to participate in the brand’s [sweeping NIL network,](https://news.adidas.com/partnerships/imagining-a-more-equitable-and-inclusive-future--adidas-announces-sweeping-network-for-student-athle/s/c1ac4031-361c-429b-8af6-89ee8bffac52) which launched in July 2022 as a first-of-its-kind program aimed at creating a more equitable future in sport. The adidas NIL network boasts thousands of active student-athletes representing over 25 sports, including hundreds of athletes from Washington across 14 sports on campus.

“adidas has quickly shown its commitment to providing the most innovative products and experiences for our athletes. And now, with its leadership in the NIL landscape, we’re excited to see Michael and Rome represent our university as they become adidas’ first NIL football athletes,” said **Jamaal Walton, Senior Associate AD for Sport Administration and Strategic Initiatives at the University of Washington.**

“Michael and Rome are two of the most promising young athletes in the country right now, and we’re thrilled to welcome them to our impressive roster,” said **Rupert Campbell, president of adidas North America.** “The U.S. has the most exciting collegiate fan and student-athlete base in the world, and we’re proud to be doubling down in sports here—including our investment in NIL and university partners to assert our position as the leading sports brand in the college sports space.”

Today’s announcement comes amid a series of investments by the brand in its university partners and fans this fall. For the first time ever, the adidas Originals brand entered the collegiate space last month with two lifestyle footwear collections customized for university students and fans through the [Rivalry](https://news.adidas.com/basketball/adidas-originals-unveils-first-ever-footwear-collection-customized-for-university-students-and-fans/s/4f05a815-4526-467f-8b83-50ff9c417d23) and [Forum](https://news.adidas.com/basketball/adidas-originals-brings-the-iconic-forum-to-universities-around-the-country-ahead-of-college-basketb/s/238f83ac-e653-411a-9d5f-81c994d50810). The brand also [celebrated](https://news.adidas.com/partnerships/adidas-celebrates-future-of-sport-with-record-breaking-crowd-in-nebraska--signs-star-volleyball-play/s/256b491b-2823-41ca-93ec-2cf20edadae2) history as the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Women’s Volleyball team broke the attendance record for any women’s sporting event in global history – hosting 92,003 at Memorial Stadium for Volleyball Day in Nebraska.

adidas believes long-term equity in sport starts with investment, and it remains committed to doing just that by continuing to support its university partners and investing in student-athletes who are shaping the future of sport.

**About adidas**

adidas is a global leader in the sporting goods industry. Headquartered in Herzogenaurach/Germany, the company employs more than 59,000 people across the globe and generated sales of € 22.5 billion in 2022.

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