



Orlando's Alan Schmadtke becomes FWAA president

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The *Orlando Sentinel's* Alan Schmadtke became the FWAA's 62nd president on Jan. 4 during the association's annual award breakfast before the FedEx Orange Bowl's national title game.

Schmadtke, 42, is the fourth FWAA president from a paper in the state of Florida, following Tom McEwen (*Tampa Tribune*, 1973), the late Bill McGrotha (*Tallahassee Democrat*, 1990) and Jack Hairston (*Gainesville Sun*, 1982).

Schmadtke, a 1984 Tennessee graduate, lays out his presidential agenda on Page 2 of this Fifth Down. He has been a writer or editor for the *Sentinel* for nearly 19 years and has definite opinions on the way college football should be covered.

Although born in suburban Chicago, Schmadtke was raised in Knoxville, Tenn., and has had a passion for college football since age 9. That's when he attended his first college football game — a Tennessee victory over Tulsa at Neyland Stadium in 1971.

He eventually melded his love for college football with journalism.

Less than a month out of school, he took a job at the *Alabama Journal*, where he covered high schools, small colleges, Alabama and Auburn football and was a general-assignment reporter and occasional columnist.

At age 23, Schmadtke became the youngest sports editor in Alabama when he took over a staff that put out an afternoon paper during the week and merged

with the *Montgomery Advertiser* to produce weekend papers.

By 1986, Schmadtke had moved to the *Sentinel* and met his wife during his first day of work at the paper's Lake County bureau, where he covered high schools and Stetson. In 1989 he moved to Orlando and began covering Central Florida and eventually became the paper's lead college reporter.

In 1991, he moved from Orlando to Tallahassee and covered Florida State until mid 1999. Schmadtke wrote the official book of the Seminoles' championship season in 1993.

When the Seminoles played for a national title at the 1999 Fiesta Bowl, Schmadtke watched alma mater Tennessee claim its first national title in 47 years by beating the Seminoles. He then covered the losing locker room in his final game as a Florida State beat reporter.

Schmadtke tried his hand at management as an assistant sports editor for two seasons. He was charged with supervising content for Florida State, Central Florida, Orlando Magic and golf beats and coordinated the department's hefty group of free-lance correspondents.

But Schmadtke was lured back to the press box when he coordinated coverage for the 2001 BCS title game at the Orange Bowl. So in 2001, he gave up his assistant sports editor's title and returned to covering Central Florida, which now has Division I-A football and Division I basketball programs.



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President's column



ALAN
SCHMADTKE

game at the Rose Bowl is set high. Hornstein introduced daily e-mails of post-practice quotes from each team, stacks of verbatim quote sheets from players and coaches in the media room, police-escorted shuttles to the stadium on game-day and late shuttles for West Coasters who wrote late into the night about Southern California's triumph.

Hornstein, you deserve a raise.

For 2005, it's back to basics. Objectives include a grass-roots membership drive, an awareness campaign of what the FWAA Web site offers and the never-ending fight to keep (or gain more) access to coaches and players. It's important to note that these aren't charges given to the FWAA's board. Rather, like Marriott VIP cards, they're offered to everyone in the association.

The membership initiative is key. During the annual FWAA board meeting in January, a startling fact came out. The 117 Division I-A sports information directors identified more than 300 of their beat writers who aren't FWAA members.

Dave Jones of *The Patriot-News* volunteered to head up membership promotion, but this won't be a one-man band. Before summer dawns, members in every conference are promised calls for recruiting help.

If there are writers on your beat that you know aren't members, it's time to ask why. And then to explain a couple of

ORLANDO — Before we get on with the business of 2005, let's tie up 2004.

If ever there were a shining example of how to run a big college football event from a media perspective, Joe Hornstein and the Orange Bowl set it. The bar for the next Bowl Championship Series title

immediate benefits: the VIP card for lower hotel rates and the free subscription to Rivals.com. Yep, free. Rarely has the word "de-committed" meant so much.

Timing is crucial. New members are best served if they join before summer. That guarantees they'll be listed in our bible — the blessedly compact, spiral-bound directory. Such immediate positive reinforcement is the best salesperson.

Membership applications are available on our Web site (www.footballwriters.com).

Which brings us to one of the best tools we have: our Web site. Last year, Ted Gangi and Cody Monk posted, in .pdf format, all the spring football guides (including some conference guides). Not many were missing, and this year's postings are expected to begin shortly.

For those who need to keep up with more than one school or conference, the site provides direct Internet links to all I-A official school Web sites and all I-A and I-AA conference sites. In addition, there is, by school, a link to every newspaper that covers I-A football.

And there's an online FWAA store (for T-shirts, coffee cups, hats, etc.).

Lest we get carried away, the appointment of Charlie Weis at Notre Dame has been an eye-opener. Weis may be an offensive genius with a perfect SAT score, but a media relations expert he's not. He promised limited media access to players and coaches, a strategy rarely espoused by SIDs.

As we move through 2005, please pass along issues of better or worse access on your college football beat to executive director Steve Richardson and first vice-president, bulldog Dennis Dodd of *CBS SportsLine*. You'll want them in your corner. In addition Ron Higgins of *The Memphis Commercial Appeal* will field bowl complaints.

Urban Meyer named FWAA coach of year

TEMPE, Ariz. — Utah coach Urban Meyer, whose Utes won the Mountain West Conference and posted a 12-0 record, was named the winner of the Football Writers Association of America/Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award.

The announcement was made on ABC Television during Utah's victory over Pittsburgh in the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl.

Meyer coached the Utes in the Fiesta Bowl but then headed to Florida to coach the Gators. He will be honored by the FWAA, Fiesta Bowl and Eddie Robinson Foundation before his first game as Florida's coach on Sept. 3 against Wyoming in Gainesville, Fla.



Meyer

The other finalists for the award were Southern California's Pete Carroll, Auburn's Tommy Tuberville, UTEP's Mike Price, Iowa's Kirk Ferentz and California's Jeff Tedford.

Meyer has been one of the rising success stories in college football during the past four years. As coach of Utah for two seasons, he compiled a 22-2 record. Previously, Meyer was the head coach of Bowling Green University, where he had a 17-6 record in two seasons.

Meyer, who led the Utes to a 17-0 victory over Southern Mississippi in the 2003 Liberty Bowl, is the first coach from a non-Bowl Championship Series school to coach his team to a BCS Bowl.

"We had six great candidates, any one of whom who could have won the award," said FWAA Executive Director Steve Richardson. "Coach Meyer has been on a meteoric rise in the college football coaching profession. And there is no reason to think he won't keep streaking at his new job."

Michael Watkins, Eddie Robinson's grandson and executive director of the Eddie Robinson Foundation, presented the award to Meyer. "It's an honor to present this award to Coach Meyer for leading Utah to its greatest season in school history," Watkins said.

The FWAA has presented a Coach of the Year Award since 1957 and selects the winner by a vote of its entire membership. The FWAA honors the outstanding coach in the name of Grambling State University's Eddie Robinson, the winningest Division I head coach in college football history.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1957	Woody Hayes, Ohio State
1958	Paul Dietzel, LSU
1959	Ben Schwartzwalder, Syracuse
1960	Murray Warmath, Minnesota
1961	Darrell Royal, Texas
1962	John McKay, USC
1963	Darrell Royal, Texas
1964	Ara Parseghian, Notre Dame
1965	Duffy Daugherty, Michigan St.
1966	Tom Cahill, Army
1967	John Pont, Indiana
1968	Woody Hayes, Ohio State
1969	Bo Schembechler, Michigan
1970	Alex Agase, Northwestern
1971	Bob Devaney, Nebraska
1972	John McKay, USC
1973	Johnny Majors, Pittsburgh
1974	Grant Teaff, Baylor
1975	Woody Hayes, Ohio State
1976	Johnny Majors, Pittsburgh
1977	Lou Holtz, Arkansas
1978	Joe Paterno, Penn State
1979	Earle Bruce, Ohio State
1980	Vince Dooley, Georgia
1981	Danny Ford, Clemson
1982	Joe Paterno, Penn State
1983	Howard Schnellenberger, Miami
1984	LaVell Edwards, BYU
1985	Fisher DeBerry, Air Force
1986	Joe Paterno, Penn State
1987	Dick MacPherson, Syracuse
1988	Lou Holtz, Notre Dame
1989	Bill McCartney, Colorado
1990	Bobby Ross, Georgia Tech
1991	Don James, Washington
1992	Gene Stallings, Alabama
1993	Terry Bowden, Auburn
1994	Rich Brooks, Oregon
1995	Gary Barnett, Northwestern
1996	Bruce Snyder, Arizona State
1997	Mike Price, Washington State
1998	Phillip Fulmer, Tennessee
1999	Frank Beamer, Virginia Tech
2000	Bob Stoops, Oklahoma
2001	Ralph Friedgen, Maryland
2002	Jim Tressel, Ohio State
2003	Nick Saban, LSU
2004	Urban Meyer, Utah

Katie Hersom wins Volney Meece scholarship

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Katie Hersom, a freshman at Oklahoma State University, has been named the eighth winner of the Volney Meece Scholarship.

The scholarship is awarded annually by the Football Writers Association of America and named for the late Volney Meece. Meece served as the FWAA's executive director for 22 years and was the organization's president in 1971.

The scholarship is a \$1,000 annual grant for four years. It is given to a deserving son or daughter of an FWAA member.

Hersom is the daughter of FWAA member Bob Her-

som, a staff writer for *The Daily Oklahoman* in Oklahoma City. *The Oklahoman* is also where Meece worked for more than 40 years.

Hersom is a 2004 graduate of Putnam City North High School, where she maintained a 3.6 grade-point average. Hersom achieved a 4.0 GPA in her first semester at OSU.

A member of the National Honor Society at Putnam City North, Hersom was able to achieve academic excellence while also being heavily involved in extracurricular activities at school, within the community and her church.

THE FIFTH DOWN



Nagurski photos by Ron J. Deshaies



Bronko Nagurski Trophy winner Derrick Johnson of Texas posed with his trophy and finalists (left to right) Carlos Rogers, David Pollack, Erasmus James and Jonathan Goddard and emcee Mark May of ESPN. The players also visited children at a hospital in Charlotte, N.C.



For the first time in 15 years, members of the FWAA's All-America team were announced on television during a one-hour ABC special on Dec. 11. The team was introduced the previous evening at a banquet sponsored by Florida Citrus Sports at the Disney/MGM Sound Stage in Orlando.



Current officers and past presidents joined FWAA Executive Director Steve Richardson for an annual dinner in Florida before the Orange Bowl game between Oklahoma and Southern California.



At the FWAA's annual awards breakfast, Memphis defensive tackle Haracio Colen was joined by family members after receiving the Courage Award, and Big 12 commissioner and BCS coordinator Kevin Weiberg (far right) fielded questions from FWAA members.,

Memphis defensive tackle named winner of FWAA's Courage Award

(Reprinted from the Courier News of Arkansas)

By Mark Burke

Many times, special qualities athletes have do not get as much attention as the athletic traits other players may have. But sometimes when these special qualities come to the surface, the athletes stand in the spotlight all to themselves. Such is the case of one River Valley native.

Haracio Colen, a Russellville native and a member of the Russellville Cyclone football team from 1999-2002, now with the University of Memphis Tigers, was recently honored for more than his play on the gridiron. He received ESPN The Magazine's Courage Award, as voted by the Football Writer's Association of America.



Colen

"This means a lot to me, and I was surprised my name would be called for such a prestigious award," Colen said. "This is just a blessing, and I'm very appreciative."

The award was created by *ESPN The Magazine* senior writer Gene Wojciechowski and is given to an athlete who displays a courageous act on or off

the field.

Colen's act of courage came from an event that changed his life forever.

On Sept. 4, 1999, Colen was on his way to see an Arkansas-Pine Bluff football game when he witnessed an accident that took the lives of both his parents, Eddie and Joyce Colen. Instead of giving up football, Colen kept playing despite suffering psychological damage.

The 6-foot-3, 286-pound sophomore defensive tackle credits his ability to overcome the tragedy to the help of family and community members. He views his accomplishment as something good for his hometown as well.

"I hope they (residents of Russellville) look at it (the award) as a thank you," Colen said. "When I had the accident, they came and helped me get through everything. I hope they accept it like that and that the award lets them see I'm still doing the right thing. We're all in this together."

The night before the accident, Colen demonstrated his athletic ability in his first action as a Cyclone. Colen recorded an astounding total of 17 tackles in his high school debut. He garnered all-conference honors each year and was all-state his senior year.

Russellville coach Jeff Holt saw Colen as a great player but it reached deeper because they shared a con-

nection.

"We had a common bond in that I lost my father at an early age," Holt said. "My first year here was when the accident occurred. I can't imagine what he must have been going through. We were able to relate, though, because of this bond we shared."

Having this bond with Colen exemplifies one of the joys a coach can share with a player.

"One of the greatest things about coaching is the relationships you have with the players," Holt said. "I really enjoyed our relationship. I think the world of Haracio. He has really matured and become a fine individual.

"He's super as a football player. We had the best defense in the conference his senior year, and he was a feared defensive football player."

Colen says having such relationships is the reason he had a chance to win the courage award.

"Going from high school to college is not as big of a difference as I thought it would be," Colen said. "The coaches put a lot of extra time in with me, and if I wouldn't have gone to Russellville, I probably wouldn't have had this opportunity. This award is a big thanks to the Russellville coaching staff."

But none of this would have been possible without family members sticking closely by during a time of loss.

"My family is the world to me," Colen said. "That's what keeps me motivated and helps keep everything in tact. I wouldn't have made it without them and the grace of God."

Among the family members that came to Colen's aid was his aunt Yvette Wimberly, who moved from Shreveport, La., after the tragic incident.

"I'm very proud of Haracio for the award he received," Wimberly said. "All the credit goes to God and the community. I'm so happy for how he's overcome his trouble and become a fine young man."

Colen's courage has changed his viewpoint on life and in turn made him better on the field.

"Since the accident, I've realized life is short and that you have to take advantage of every opportunity you get," Colen said. "You've got to stay focused, and all this has made me realize you have to step it up. I think that's helped me as a football player as well to just go out there and give everything I've got.

"I never expected in a million years to get something like this. I hope this is something I've reaped from hard work, but I look at this as a beginning, and I hope to just stay focused and stay healthy. I'd like to play on the next level (NFL), but that's not for everyone. I've just got to go out there and keep my focus."



FWAA freshman All-America team

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The Football Writers Association of America and Scripps announced its fourth annual Freshman All-America team during the association's annual awards breakfast.

The team included three players from Michigan and two players each from Southern California, Arizona State and Auburn. There were six unanimous selections, including Heisman Trophy finalist Adrian Peterson of Okla-

homa.

In addition, UTEP coach Mike Price was named the top first-year coach at his school.

The team and coach are selected by a group of writers led by FWAA second vice president Mike Griffith of the Knoxville News-Sentinel, a member of the Scripps chain. Both true freshmen and red-shirt freshmen were considered for the team.

OFFENSE

QB	Chad Henne	TFr	Michigan*
RB	Michael Hart	TFr	Michigan
RB	Adrian Peterson	TFr	Oklahoma*
RB	Jamario Thomas	TFr	N. Texas
OT	Barry Richardson	TFr	Clemson
RT	Jake Long	RFr	Michigan
LG/C	Kory Lichtensteiger	RFr	Bowling Green
LG	Ryan Wendell	TFr	Fresno State
OT	Sam Baker	RFr	USC
TE	Zach Miller	TFr	Arizona State
WR	Dwayne Jarrett	TFr	USC
WR	Todd Blythe	RFr	Iowa State

DEFENSE

DT	Frank Okam	TFr	Texas
DE	Quentin Groves	RFr	Auburn*
DE	Stanley McClover	RFr	Auburn
LB	Dan Connor	TFr	Penn State
LB	Brian Toal	TFr	Boston College
LB	Brandon Siler	Tfr	Florida
LB	Josh Williams	RFr	Arkansas State
CB	Roshawn Fellows	RFr	Tennessee*
CB	Antoine Cason	TFr	Arizona
S	Ko Simpson	TFr	South Carolina*
S	Quintin Demps	RFr	UTEP

SPECIALISTS

K	Travis Bell	RFr	Georgia Tech
P	Chris MacDonald	RFr	Arizona State
KR	Kevin Robinson	TFr	Utah State
PR	Ted Ginn Jr.	TFr	Ohio State*

FIRST-YEAR COACH

Mike Price	UTEP
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* Unanimous selection

McGrane Award goes to Steve Richardson

FWAA executive director Steve Richardson has been named the recipient of the 2005 Bert McGrane Award and will receive the plaque in early August at the College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Ind.

Richardson has been executive director of the 64-year-old FWAA since 1996 and is the organization's fourth person in that position, following McGrane, Volney Meece and Bob Hammel.

The McGrane award is presented to an FWAA member who has performed great service to the organization and the writing profession. It is named after McGrane, who was the executive secretary of the FWAA from the early 1940s until 1973.

Richardson, also a Dallas-based freelance writer, has covered sports since the late 1970s. He worked at the *Kansas City Star* and the *Dallas Morning News* for more than 20 years combined. He serves as a special correspondent for college basketball for several publi-

cations and is currently writing the *Greatest Moments in Missouri Valley Conference History*, which is his fourth book.

His other works are *Ricky Williams: Dreadlocks to Ditka*, *Kelvin Sampson: The OU Basketball Story*, and *Tales from the Texas Longhorns*. He also collaborated with Rare Air Media for ABC Sports' College Football All-Time All-America Team book in 2000.

For 25 years, he has been a correspondent for *Sports Illustrated* and written free-lance articles for numerous publications. Richardson, a 1975 graduate from the Missouri School of Journalism, has collected writing awards while working in three states. He has covered 24 Final Fours, all the traditional major bowl games, major professional sports and two Olympics. He was the president of the United States Basketball Writers Association in 2002-03.

USC wins sixth Grantland Rice Trophy

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — The University of Southern California Trojans successfully defended their national title and claimed their second straight Grantland Rice Trophy when they completed a 13-0 season with a 55-19 win over Oklahoma in the FedEx Orange Bowl.

FWAA president Alan Schmadtke of the Orlando Sentinel presented the trophy to USC head coach Pete Carroll on the morning after the bowl game.

The Trojans, the unanimous choice of the 16 voters of the Football Writers Association of America's Grantland Rice Super 16 Poll, won their sixth FWAA national title.

Auburn, also unbeaten at 13-0, finished second in the final FWAA poll. The Tigers received each of the 16 second-place votes.

USC's six championships are the most in the 51-year history of the Rice trophy. Oklahoma has won five FWAA national titles and five other schools have won four apiece since 1954, when the trophy named for the legendary sportswriter was introduced.

USC is just the fourth school to win back-to-back Grantland Rice trophies, the last being Nebraska in 1994-95. Nebraska also claimed consecutive titles in 1970-71. Alabama (1978-79) and Oklahoma (1955-56) are the other two schools to win two in a row.

The Grantland Rice Super 16 Poll, introduced for the

2002 season, selects the nation's top 16 teams in polling that begins each October. Sixteen regionally balanced voters select the nation's top teams in the FWAA poll. The Super 16 also distinguishes itself by making each voter's ballot public.

FWAA SUPER 16 POLL

Rank	School	1st Place Votes	Record	Pts.
1.	USC	16	13-0	256
2.	Auburn		13-0	240
3.	Oklahoma		12-1	215
4.	Utah		12-0	210
5.	Texas		11-1	198
6.	Louisville		11-1	167
7.	Georgia		10-2	146
8.	Iowa		10-2	128
9.	Virginia Tech		10-3	116
10.	California		10-2	97
11.	Tennessee		10-3	93
12.	Miami		9-3	86
13.	Boise State		11-1	75
14.	Michigan		9-3	59
15.	Florida State		9-3	39
16.	LSU		9-3	29



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