



## FWAA distributes awards to players, plans annual meeting

The Football Writers Association of America has selected winners of the Bronko Nagurski and Outland Trophies and named its 25-man All-America team. The FWAA also is preparing for its annual meeting Jan. 3-5 in New Orleans and selection of the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year.

The Nagurski Trophy was claimed by Oklahoma defensive back Derrick Strait on Dec. 8 at the Charlotte Touchdown Club banquet.

The Outland Trophy went to Iowa offensive tackle Robert Gallery, who was named the winner on Dec. 11 in Orlando, Fla. Gallery also will be honored at the Omaha Sports Committee Banquet on Jan. 8 in Omaha.

The FWAA All-America team, which has been selected since 1944, was named in late November and appears on Pages 4-5 of *The Fifth Down*. The team is highlighted by six players from Oklahoma. The entire team was honored at a banquet hosted by Florida Citrus Sports on Dec. 12 in Orlando.

On Page 3, six finalists for the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award appear. FWAA members will be able to vote on-line for the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year award.

The FWAA's annual meeting will be Jan. 3-5 at the New Orleans Hyatt Regency Hotel in conjunction with the Bowl Championship Series 1-2 game at the Nokia Sugar Bowl. The Sugar Bowl's schedule of events is on Page 8 of this

*Fifth Down*.

The FWAA Board Meeting will be at 6 p.m. Jan. 3 at a room to be designated at the Hyatt Regency. An invitation only Past Presidents Dinner will be held the evening of Jan. 3. On Jan. 4, the FWAA's award breakfast/meeting will be at the Hyatt Regency from 9:15 to 11:45 a.m. Big East commissioner Mike Tranghese, chairman of the BCS, is expected to be available for a question and answer session at the breakfast.

For the second year, the FWAA, in conjunction with *ESPN The Magazine*, will present the Courage Award to a worthy recipient. The winner will be announced at the FWAA awards breakfast and receive the Courage Award Trophy.

The FWAA also will honor a deserving son or daughter of an FWAA member with the Volney Meece Scholarship, so named after the long-time executive director. Winners of best writing contest will be recognized and receive certificates and cash prizes at the breakfast.

The presentation of the FWAA's Grantland Rice Super 16 Trophy is tentatively scheduled for the morning of Jan. 5 at the Hyatt Regency. The FWAA has conducted a poll during the 2003 football season, and its 16 voters will determine the trophy winner in balloting after the Sugar Bowl.

If the poll winner is a team other than the victor in the Sugar Bowl, the Grantland Rice Super 16 trophy will be presented later.



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# President's column



## WALLY HALL

At our annual meeting in New Orleans early next month, members of the Football Writers Association of America will consider a new system to help writers and sports information directors improve working conditions in press boxes and resolve other complaints by not only writers but also SIDs.

Duke sports information director Jon Jackson suggested the idea earlier this month. And I think it has some merit!

The FWAA gets calls all the time from both writers and sports information directors about situations in press boxes or in matters covering teams. It seems some writers are afraid to complain directly to those they cover. And vice-versa.

Sports information directors sometimes say they are afraid to bring up complaints they have about writers for fear of "negative coverage." There sometimes is a communications breakdown over working conditions.

So let's set up a buffer system on the regional, not national level.

When these complaints come into the national office, it is often like the federal government taking the complaint. Far removed from the situation at hand, the FWAA national office often has to be a mediator for something it has not seen and has to rely on second-hand accounts. It really is ridiculous that the parties involved can't sort these things out.

Jackson suggests that each major conference appoint a sports information director who is an FWAA member to be the liaison for that league. In other words, the FWAA SID designee would be the person the writer and/or SID would go to in case of a dispute. Each league would strive to have an SID who is considered fair and professional (not

that they all aren't). In case of dispute involving that particular SID, an alternate SID in each league would be appointed.

This could be a two-way street.

Taking it a step further, there could be a neutral writer in each league who would then huddle with the designated SID to try and iron out the problem.

SIDs often are irritated at writers. Imagine that. Although they often refrain from commenting directly to their own writers, they have called the national office about writers making fun of their teams in the press boxes. They have complained about writers giving away press credentials. They have complained about writers not showing up for games after requesting credentials that someone else could have used.

And there are the complaints by writers — no press parking available at some schools (even if paying for it), cheering in the press boxes by fans, poor seating in press boxes, inadequate areas to interview visiting teams at games, little or no access to players or coaches during the week before a game, no call backs from players after SIDs say they will call.

We have received all those complaints and more from both sides.

And, as other recent presidents have suggested, with the advent of the Internet there is less personal contact between writers and sports information directors than ever before. If the press box is being realigned, then maybe the writers should at least know before they walk-in on game day and find themselves in the end zone. The same can be said about writers failing to inform SIDs about changes in their profession.

The more communication the better.

In a profession where communication is paramount, it would be nice to see FWAA members communicate.

## Six named finalists for coach of the year

Six coaches have been named finalists for the Eddie Robinson/FWAA Coach of the Year Award.

Southern California's Pete Carroll, Navy's Paul Johnson, Tulsa's Steve Kragthorpe, Texas Christian's Gary Patterson, LSU's Nick Saban and Oklahoma's Bob Stoops were named finalists for the award, whose winner will be named Jan. 8 in Phoenix.

The FWAA has presented a Coach of the Year Award since 1957 and annually selects the winner by a vote of its entire membership. The Tostitos Fiesta Bowl and America West Airlines sponsor the awards banquet.

Carroll's Pac-10 champion USC Trojans (11-1) will face Michigan in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1. Because USC is ranked No. 1 in the Associated Press poll, it could lay claim to a national championship with a victory over the Wolverines.

Johnson has led Navy to an 8-4 mark and an appearance in the Houston Bowl in his second season at the Academy. The Midshipmen have enjoyed their first winning season since 1997, and they won the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy for the first time since 1981. Navy's postseason appearance is its first since the 1996 season.

Kragthorpe is in his first season at Tulsa. Going into the Humanitarian Bowl against Georgia Tech, Kragthorpe has fashioned an 8-4 record with Tulsa, which was 1-11 last season. His coaching job helped produce the biggest turnaround in Division I-A this season. And, the eight victories are the most at the school since 1991.

Patterson's Horned Frogs (11-1) were 10-0 and challenging for a spot in the BCS before losing to Southern Mississippi in their 11th game of the season. Still, TCU will appear in its sixth straight bowl game when it faces Boise State in the first Fort Worth Bowl on Dec. 23.

Stoops' Sooners (12-1) will meet Saban's SEC champion LSU Tigers (12-1) in the Nokia Sugar Bowl on Jan. 4, 2004, in New Orleans. The winner of the Bowl Championship Series 1-2 game could grab at least a share of the national championship.

Stoops won the Eddie Robinson Award in 2000, when the Sooners went 13-0 and defeated Florida State in the FedEx Orange Bowl. Saban is a first-time finalist, as are the other four coaches.

The FWAA honors an outstanding coach each year in the name of Grambling State University's Eddie Robinson, the winningest Division I head coach in college football history.

The banquet also helps support the Eddie Robinson Foundation, which is based in Atlanta.



**Pete  
Carroll**



**Steve  
Kragthorpe**



**Paul  
Johnson**



**Gary  
Patterson**



**Nick  
Saban**



**Bob  
Stoops**

## FWAA ALL-AMERICAN OFFENSE



**White**  
*Oklahoma*



**Jones**  
*Virginia Tech*

Position	Player	School	Height	Weight	Class
WR	Mark Clayton	Oklahoma	5-11	187	Jr.
WR	Mike Williams	Southern California	6-5	210	So.
WR	Larry Fitzgerald	Pittsburgh	6-3	210	So.
TE	Kellen Winslow	Miami, Fla.	6-5	243	Jr.
OL	Robert Gallery	Iowa	6-7	320	Sr.
OL	Shawn Andrews	Arkansas	6-5	371	Jr.
C	Jake Grove	Virginia Tech	6-3	292	Sr.
OL	Alex Barron	Florida State	6-6	316	Jr.
OL	Jacob Rogers	Southern California	6-6	305	Sr.
QB	Jason White	Oklahoma	6-2	224	Sr.
RB	Kevin Jones	Virginia Tech	6-0	212	Jr.
K	Nick Browne	TCU	5-10	165	Sr.
KR	Antonio Perkins	Oklahoma	6-0	182	Jr.



**Clayton**  
*Oklahoma*



**Williams**  
*USC*



**Fitzgerald**  
*Pittsburgh*



**Winslow**  
*Miami*



**Gallery**  
*Iowa*



**Andrews**  
*Arkansas*



**Grove**  
*Virginia Tech*



**Barron**  
*Florida St.*



**Rogers**  
*USC*



**Browne**  
*TCU*



**Perkins**  
*Oklahoma*

## FWAA ALL-AMERICAN DEFENSE

Position	Player	School	Height	Weight	Class
LB	Teddy Lehman	Oklahoma	6-2	230	Sr.
LB	Derrick Johnson	Texas	6-4	220	Jr.
LB	Grant Wiley	West Virginia	6-1	230	Sr.
E	Dave Ball	UCLA	6-6	270	Sr.
T	Tommie Harris	Oklahoma	6-3	278	Jr.
T	Chad Lavalais	LSU	6-3	289	Sr.
E	Kenechi Udeze	Southern California	6-4	280	Jr.
B	Derrick Strait	Oklahoma	5-11	191	Sr.
B	Sean Taylor	Miami, Fla.	6-3	225	Jr.
B	Will Allen	Ohio State	6-2	190	Sr.
B	Keiwan Ratliff	Florida	5-10	178	Sr.
P	Dustin Colquitt	Tennessee	6-2	196	Jr.



**Lehman**  
*Oklahoma*



**Johnson**  
*Texas*



**Wiley**  
*West Virginia*



**Ball**  
*UCLA*



**Harris**  
*Oklahoma*



**Lavalais**  
*LSU*



**Udeze**  
*USC*



**Strait**  
*Oklahoma*



**Taylor**  
*Miami, Fla.*



**Allen**  
*Ohio St.*



**Ratliff**  
*Florida*



**Colquitt**  
*Tennessee*

## Outland Trophy awarded to Iowa's Gallery

ORLANDO, Fla. — Iowa offensive tackle Robert Gallery has become the third Hawkeye to be named the winner of the Outland Trophy.

Former Iowa players Calvin Jones (1955) and Alex Karras (1957) won the Outland Trophy before Gallery, a 6-7, 320-pound senior.

The Outland Trophy, presented by the FWAAs since 1946, goes to the top interior lineman in college football.

Gallery was announced as the winner over Arkansas offensive tackle Shawn Andrews and LSU defensive tackle Chad Lavalais on the ESPN College Football Awards Show on Dec. 11. The annual presentation banquet, which is sponsored by the Omaha Sports Committee, will be Jan. 8 in Omaha, Neb.

"I was really surprised," Gallery said. "It was something I have worked for all year. But you never know in situations like this. It was a great honor."

Gallery was the top talent on a Hawkeye offensive line that lost four starters from 2002 but still produced a 1,000-yard rusher in 2003 behind his blocking.

An Iowa farm boy, Gallery's graduating high school class had only 34 students. He played "A" football in high school and was a starter on the basketball team and a higher jumper on the track team. He is one of three brothers to play football for Iowa, where he started out as a tight end.

"I knew I would be a lineman at some point," Gallery said. "I knew I would not be a great tight end because I was not that fast (for that position)."

Gallery moved to the right side of the offensive line soon into his Hawkeye career and eventually wound up on the left side, which he likes.

"I would rather play the left side," Gallery said. "The best defender is usually over there. And I am left-handed. I feel more comfortable coming out of the left-handed stance."

Gallery picked up the nickname "Mountain" from an Iowa sports writer. And he has enhanced that reputation



**Robert Gallery is the third Iowa player to win the Outland Trophy, following Calvin Jones in 1955 and Alex Karras in 1957.**

as a mountain man by letting his hair grow for 2½ years.

"I haven't seen many offensive linemen with the talents of Robert Gallery," said Gil Brandt, an NFL Draft expert. "He's going to make some NFL team much better next year."

Iowa Coach Kirk Ferentz calls Gallery the best offensive linemen he has coached.

The Outland is the third oldest award in major college football behind the Heisman and Maxwell awards.

It is named after the late John Outland, who created the award a year before his death. An All-American lineman at the University of Pennsylvania at the turn of the century, Dr. Outland created the award to give more recognition to linemen. The first Outland Award was presented to the late George Connor of Notre Dame.

### PAST OUTLAND WINNERS

1946 George Connor, Notre Dame	1961 Merlin Olsen, Utah State	1976 Ross Browner, Notre Dame	1991 Steve Emtman, Washington
1947 Joe Steffy, Army	1962 Bobby Bell, Minnesota	1977 Brad Shearer, Texas	1992 Will Shields, Nebraska
1948 Bill Fischer, Notre Dame	1963 Scott Appleton, Texas	1978 Greg Roberts, Oklahoma	1993 Rob Waldrop, Arizona
1949 Ed Bagdon, Michigan State	1964 Steve Delong, Tennessee	1979 Jim Ritcher, N.C. State	1994 Zach Wiegert, Nebraska
1950 Bob Gain, Kentucky	1965 Tommy Nobis, Texas	1980 Mark May, Pittsburgh	1995 Jonathan Ogden, UCLA
1951 Jim Weatherall, Oklahoma	1966 Loyd Phillips, Arkansas	1981 Dave Rimington, Nebraska	1996 Orlando Pace, Ohio State
1952 Dick Modzelewski, Maryland	1967 Ron Yary, USC	1982 Dave Rimington, Nebraska	1997 Aaron Taylor, Nebraska
1953 J.D. Roberts, Oklahoma	1968 Bill Stanfill, Georgia	1983 Dean Steinkuhler, Nebraska	1998 Kris Farris, UCLA
1954 Bill Brooks, Arkansas	1969 Mike Reid, Penn State	1984 Bruce Smith, Virginia Tech	1999 Chris Samuels, Alabama
1955 Calvin Jones, Iowa	1970 Jim Stillwagon, Ohio State	1985 Mike Ruth, Boston College	2000 John Henderson, Tennessee
1956 Jim Parker, Ohio State	1971 Larry Jacobson, Nebraska	1986 Jason Buck, BYU	2001 Bryant McKinnie, Miami
1957 Alex Karras, Iowa	1972 Rich Glover, Nebraska	1987 Chad Hennings, Air Force	2002 Rien Long, Washington State
1958 Zeke Smith, Auburn	1973 John Hicks, Ohio State	1988 Tracy Rucker, Auburn	
1959 Mike McGee, Duke	1974 Randy White, Maryland	1989 Mohammed Elewonibi, BYU	
1960 Tom Brown, Minnesota	1975 Lee Roy Selmon, Oklahoma	1990 Russell Maryland, Miami (Fla.)	

# OU's Strait wins Bronko Nagurski Trophy

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — For the second time in three years, an Oklahoma defensive back has claimed the Bronko Nagurski Trophy.

On Dec. 8, OU cornerback Derrick Strait was named the 11th winner of the award, which is presented annually by the Football Writers Association of America and the Charlotte Touchdown Club to the best defensive player in college football.

Two years ago the award went to Oklahoma's Roy Williams, now a member of the Dallas Cowboys.

"You see very few players who have the impact on the game like he does," Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops said of Strait. "I have never seen a guy do what he does.

"His leadership, toughness, his ability to make plays and affect other players. The last several years he has been a great leader and made a difference in a very good football program."

Strait won the award over Oklahoma teammate Tommie Harris, a defensive tackle. Other Bronko Nagurski finalists were UCLA end Dave Ball, LSU tackle Chad Lavalais and West Virginia linebacker Grant Wiley.

"I am surprised because there are a lot of great defensive players here," Strait said. "I am just happy to be in the same group. Winning is amazing.

"I feel this was one of my best seasons. I had a better season last season interception-wise. But this season I had a better all-around season.

"Coach Mike Stoops made me the player I was," Strait said of OU's former co-defensive coordinator and secondary coach who recently was named head coach at Arizona. "I hadn't played that much cornerback before I got to Oklahoma."

Strait, a 5-11, 195 senior and a native of Austin, Texas, was OU's third-leading tackler this season with 69 (47 unassisted). He had seven tackles for 19 yards in losses and intercepted three passes for 127 return yards. He has set Oklahoma career records for passes broken up, career starts and interception return yards.

He has also made big plays in big games.

Strait's interception against Texas early in the game keyed a 65-13 OU victory in which he also had 11 tackles (one for a loss), two fumble recoveries and three passes broken up. He had an interception and 97-yard return against Texas Tech.

"You have to play big in the big games," Strait said. "I made the first interception (against Texas) and we just kept rolling from there on out."

Strait said he expected Lavalais or Wiley to win the award. But Harris all along was projecting Strait as the winner,

"Definitely," Harris said of Strait winning. "He has the ability to change the whole game. I have never seen a cornerback on one side of the field make so many things



**Oklahoma cornerback Derrick Strait is the 11th winner of the Bronko Nagurski Trophy. His interception early in OU's against Texas keyed a 65-13 Sooner victory.**

happen."

Strait also has broken up 11 passes, recovered four fumbles and forced two fumbles this season.

## PAST NAGURSKI WINNERS

Year	Player	School
1993	Rob Waldrop	Arizona
1994	Warren Sapp	Miami (Fla.)
1995	Pat Fitzgerald	Northwestern
1996	Pat Fitzgerald	Northwestern
1997	Charles Woodson	Michigan
1998	Champ Bailey	Georgia
1999	Corey Moore	Virginia Tech
2000	Dan Morgan	Miami
2001	Roy Williams	Oklahoma
2002	Terrell Suggs	Arizona State

# Nokia Sugar Bowl Schedule of Media Events

**Saturday, December 27**

**Oklahoma arrival** — 2:30 p.m. at Louis Armstrong Airport, Old General Aviation Terminal, Gate 110V

(Not in the Main Airport Terminal)

**Oklahoma Practice** — 3:30-5 p.m. at Superdome

**Sunday, December 28**

**LSU bus arrival** — Noon at New Orleans Marriott

**LSU Practice** — 3:30-5:30 p.m. at Saints Facility

**Oklahoma Practice** — 3:30-5:40 p.m. at Tulane University

**Monday, December 29**

**Oklahoma Practice** — 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Superdome

**LSU Practice** — 2-4 p.m. at Superdome

**Tuesday, December 30**

**Head Coaches Press Conference**

**OU coach Bob Stoops** — 1:15 p.m. at Hyatt Regency

**LSU coach Nick Saban at Hyatt Regency** — 4:30 p.m.

**Oklahoma Practice** — 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Superdome

**LSU Practice** — 2-4 p.m. at Superdome

**Media Cocktail Party** — 7-9 p.m. at National D-Day Museum (shuttle provided)

**Wednesday, December 31**

**Oklahoma News Conference** — 10:30 a.m. at Hyatt Regency

Co-Defensive Coordinators Mike Stoops and Brent Venables, DT Tommie Harris, DE Dan Cody, LB Teddy Lehman, DB Derrick Strait

**LSU News Conference** — 2:30 p.m. at Hyatt Regency

Offensive Coordinator Jimbo Fisher, QB Matt Mauck, WR Michael Clayton, OL Stephen Peterman, OL Rodney Reed, WR/RS Skyler Green



**LSU Practice** — 11:45 a.m.-2 p.m. at Superdome

**Oklahoma Practice** — 2:45-5 p.m. at Superdome

**Thursday, January 1**

**Oklahoma News Conference** — 2 p.m. at Hyatt Regency

Offensive Coordinator Chuck Long & Run Game Coordinator Kevin Wilson, QB Jason White, RB Renaldo Works, WR Mark Clayton, C Vince Carter

**LSU News Conference** — 4:30 p.m. at Hyatt Regency

Defensive Coordinator Will Muschamp, DE Marcus Spears, DT Chad Lavalais, SS Jack Hunt, CB Corey Webster, LB Lionel Turner

**Oklahoma Practice** — 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Superdome

**LSU Practice** — 2-4 p.m. at Superdome

**Media Cocktail Party** — 7-9 p.m. at Audubon Aquarium of the Americas (shuttle provided)

**Friday, January 2**

**Media Day at Superdome**

**LSU Players** — 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

**Media Lunch sponsored by Nokia** — 1-3 p.m. in Dome Ballroom

**Oklahoma Players** — 4 p.m.-5 p.m.

**LSU Practice** — 1-3 p.m. at Saints Facility

**Oklahoma Practice** — 1:30-3:30 p.m. at Superdome

**Media Reception** — 7-9 p.m. at Harrah's Casino (shuttle provided)

**Saturday, January 3**

**Two Head Coaches Press Conference and Photo Op with Championship Trophy**

**OU coach Bob Stoops** — 10-10:30 a.m.

**Photo Op with both coaches** — 10:30-10:40 a.m.

**LSU coach Nick Saban** — 10:40-11:10 a.m.

**Sugar Bowl Media Brunch** — 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hyatt Regency

**FWAA Board Meeting** — Hyatt Regency

**Oklahoma Practice** — Closed

**LSU Practice** — Closed

**Sunday, January 4**

**FWAA Awards Breakfast and Meeting** — 9:15-11:45 a.m. at Hyatt Regency

**70th NOKIA SUGAR BOWL** — 7 p.m.

**Post Game Media Meal** at Hyatt Regency

**Monday, January 5**

**Winning Head Coach & Miller-Digby Award Winner (Most Outstanding Player) at Hyatt Regency** — Time TBA (early morning)



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