

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Orange Bowl Committee
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Duke's Holliday Nominated for Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award

DALLAS (FWAA) – Duke's Blair Holliday is the weekly nominee for the 2012 Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award, to be announced at the end of the season. Holliday, a sophomore wide receiver from Sherman Oaks, Calif., is recovering from a traumatic brain injury that left him critically injured last summer.

Holliday was injured in a jet-ski accident on July 4 on Lake Tillery, about 50 miles east of Charlotte, N.C., while on an outing with friends. Teammate Jamison Crowder's jet-ski collided with his, striking Holliday in the head. He was unconscious and briefly lost a pulse but was revived by CPR performed by a nursing student, Chelsea Gibbons, who witnessed the accident.

In a coma – and then battling pneumonia – Holliday initially wasn't expected to live. After a month at the University of North Carolina Trauma Center, he was transferred to the Sheppard Center in Atlanta, which specializes in rehabilitation of brain injuries. He had to relearn almost every physical activity, including walking and talking, but his recovery quickly accelerated to well ahead of schedule. A month later, he left the Sheppard Center, though he continued the rehabilitation on an outpatient basis.

Holliday served as an honorary team captain before the Blue Devils' game with North Carolina Central on Sept. 15, leading them into Wallace Wade Stadium.

"Blair is a miracle," Duke coach David Cutcliffe told the News & Observer. "Right now, our focus is on getting him enrolled back in school. Let's try some schoolwork and see how he accomplishes those tasks."

Holliday plans to return to classes at Duke in January. He hopes to play football again, though if it doesn't happen, he told The Sporting News, "I won't be bummed."

"I've come far, I can go farther," Holliday told The Sporting News. "I realize if I'm maybe a quarter of the way there, I need to be 100 percent. Maybe I'm not the best I can be now, but I can get to that point."

For the seventh straight year, the Football Writers Association of America and the Discover Orange Bowl will announce a weekly nominee each Wednesday during the season. A blue-ribbon panel will determine the winner from all of the nominees. The winner of the Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award will be announced in December and be presented with the trophy during the week of the 2013 Discover BCS National Championship Game.

The Courage Award was created by ESPN The Magazine's senior writer Gene Wojciechowski, also an FWAA member. A select group of writers from the FWAA vote on the winner each year. The requirements for nomination include displaying courage on or off the field, including overcoming an injury or physical handicap, preventing a disaster or living through hardship.

Previous winners of the FWAA's Courage Award are Michigan State offensive lineman Arthur Ray Jr. (2011), Rutgers defensive tackle Eric LeGrand (2010), the University of Connecticut football team (2009), Tulsa's Wilson Holloway (2008), Navy's Zerbin Singleton (2007), Clemson's Ray Ray McElrathbey (2006), the Tulane football team (2005), Memphis' Haracio Colen (2004), San Jose State's Neil Parry (2003) and Toledo's William Bratton (2002).

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About the Orange Bowl

The Orange Bowl is a 348-member, primarily-volunteer non-profit sports organization that promotes and serves the South Florida community. The Orange Bowl Festival features a year-round schedule of events culminating with the Discover Orange Bowl on January 1, 2013 and the Discover BCS National Championship on January 7, 2013. Other Orange Bowl core events include the MetroPCS Orange Bowl Basketball Classic, Orange Bowl Youth Football Alliance presented by Sports Authority, Orange Bowl International Tennis Championships, Orange Bowl Sailing Regatta Series and Orange Bowl Paddle Championships. For more information on the 2012-13 Orange Bowl Festival and its events, including promotional and volunteer opportunities through the Ambassador Program, log on to www.orangebowl.org.

The **Football Writers Association of America**, a non-profit organization founded in 1941, consists of more than 1,200 men and women who cover college football for a living. The membership includes journalists, broadcasters and publicists, as well as key executives in all the areas that involve the game. The FWAA works to govern areas that include gameday operations, major awards and its annual All-America team. For more information about the FWAA and its award programs, contact Steve Richardson at tiger@fwa.com or 972-713-6198.

2012 Discover Orange Bowl Courage Award Nominees

- **Sept. 26: Daniel Rodriguez, Clemson**
- **Oct. 3: Angelo Richardson, Arizona State**
- **Oct. 10: Patience Beard, Arkansas**
- **Oct. 17: Neiron Ball, Florida**
- **Oct. 31: Dan Werner, Mississippi**
- **Nov. 8: Jay Prosch, Auburn**
- **Nov. 15: Austin Woods, Oklahoma**
- **Nov. 21: Blair Holliday, Duke**