

# HEAVY METAL: THE NCFAA NEWSLETTER (NOV. 20, 2020)

## Bednarik Award – nation's defensive player of the year

The Maxwell Football Club honored Miami DE **Jaelan Phillips** with its Bednarik Player of the Week Award after a stellar game in a 25-24 win at Virginia Tech. Phillips (#15, Jr., Redlands, Calif.) had 4.5 TFL's, a season-high for Miami and the second-most by any Hurricane since now-head coach Manny Diaz arrived as defensive coordinator in 2016. He also had 2.5 sacks and tied for the team lead with eight total tackles, four of them solo stops. Phillips is one of 10 players the MFC added to its Watch List earlier this week to contend for this season's 26th Chuck Bednarik Award because of their noteworthy play. The other nine additions are: **Will Anderson**, LB, Fr., Alabama; **Shemar Jean-Charles**, CB, Sr., App State; **Myles Murphy**, DE, Fr., Clemson; **Azeez Ojulari**, LB, So., Georgia; **Jon Rhattigan**, LB, Sr., Army West Point; **Asante Samuel**, CB, Jr., Florida State; **Myjai Sanders**, DE, Jr., Cincinnati; **Rashad Weaver**, DE, Sr., Pitt; and **Rodarius Williams**, CB, Sr., Oklahoma State.

## Biletnikoff Award – nation's outstanding receiver regardless of position

The Tallahassee Quarterback Club Foundation added eight more receivers to its 2020 Watch List earlier this week, the fourth set of additions this season. The updated Watch List can be found here: [biletnikoffaward.com/2020-biletnikoff-award-watch-list](http://biletnikoffaward.com/2020-biletnikoff-award-watch-list). The Watch List additions are: **Calvin Austin III** of Memphis (#4, Jr., Memphis, Tenn. – the American's third-leading receiver at 107.8 ypg is 13th nationally with 647 receiving yards); **Ronnie Bell** of Michigan (#8, Jr., Kansas City, Mo. – is 52nd nationally at 81.3 yards per game but is averaging 18.06 yards per catch); **Jahan Dotson** of Penn State (#5, Jr., Nazareth, Pa. – averaging 97.0 ypg but has five TD's among his 23 receptions); **Romeo Doubs** of Nevada (#7, Jr., Los Angeles, Calif. – the nation's current leading receiver by average at 161.3 ypg and despite having played only four games is already tied for fourth in TD's with eight and averages 20.81 yards per catch); **Ty Fryfogle** of Indiana (#3, Sr., Lucedale, Miss. – one of the keys to the upstart Hoosiers' rise averaging 106.0 ypg, third in the Big Ten, with a 17.67-yard average per catch); **Bo Melton** of Rutgers (#18, Sr., Mays Landing, N.J. – 7th in the Big Ten at 83.5 ypg with four TD's); **Jaquarii Roberson** of Wake Forest (#5, Jr., Murfreesboro, N.C. – the ACC's second-leading receiver at 93.9 ypg and his 657 yards are 11th nationally); and **Garrett Wilson** of Ohio State (#5, So., Austin, Texas – leads the Big Ten and is eighth nationally averaging 114.7 ypg and his 8.0 rpg tie for seventh in the country).

The TQCF has opened its 2020 FanVote at [biletnikoffaward.com/fan-vote](http://biletnikoffaward.com/fan-vote). The aggregate fan tally will be counted as one official vote to determine semi-finalists (10), finalists (three) and the winner.

## Bronko Nagurski Trophy – nation's top defensive player

The FWAA honored Tulsa linebacker **Zaven Collins** with its National Defensive Player of the Week after his crucial plays in a 28-24 win over No. 19 SMU. Collins (#23, Jr., Hominy, Okla.) picked off an SMU pass with 1:23 left to seal the game and also had six tackles, two tackles for losses and a sack. It was the first time for a Tulsa player to earn the honor. Collins leads The American in interceptions per game (3 total, 0.60 per game) and has 10.0 TFL's and four sacks this season. In five games thus far, including three against top-25 opponents (Oklahoma State, UCF and SMU) Collins had 24 solo tackles among his 33 total stops (73 percent solos). He took back one of his three interceptions for a 38-yard touchdown at USF and the 2018 FWAA Freshman All-American has been named The American's Defensive Player of the Week three times this season.

## Burlsworth Trophy – most outstanding player who started his career as a walk-on. 10 Semifinalists announced Dec. 1; Finalists: Dec. 8

Rodrigo Blankenship, the bespeckled 2019 Burlsworth Trophy finalist and kicker for the Indianapolis Colts, wins the award this week for the most interesting press conference. Not only is he the Colts' leading scorer but he is also friends with wrestling legend Ric Flair and is quickly becoming a fan favorite. Burlsworth Trophy nominations have opened toward announcing the 10 semifinalists on Dec. 1. The 2020 Burlsworth Trophy ceremony will be a virtual event on Mon., Dec. 21.

## Butkus Award – nation's best linebacker

**Nate Landman** of Colorado (#53, Sr., Danville, Calif.) had a banner game in the Buffs' 35-32 win over Stanford, notching 17 tackles and 14 solos to go with a TFL, a TD-saving tackle and a fumble recovery. He's the 11th player in Colorado history to top 200 unassisted tackles and is now in the school's top 20 in all-time tackles and the 17th player with 300 or more career stops (303, 203 solo and 100 assisted). Cincinnati LB **Jarell White** (#8, Sr., Cincinnati, Ohio) continues to lead The American in tackles at 9.3 per game, which is exactly 0.5 above the second-leading mark by Navy LB **Diego Fagot**. White had seven tackles, a sack and a QB hurry against East Carolina last week and scored the first TD of his career on a 26-yard interception return. White is in a great race for The American's Defensive Player of the Year along with Tulsa LB Zaven Collins (#23, Jr., Hominy, Okla.), whose key interception helped stop SMU with 1:23 left in Tulsa's 28-24 win. Collins had six tackles, two TFL's and a sack against SMU, and leads The American in interceptions per game (3 total, 0.60 per game) and has 10.0 TFL's and four sacks. Tulsa and Cincinnati meet Dec. 12 and are favored for a rematch the following week in The American's championship game. Ball State LB **Brandon Martin** (#7, Jr., Indianapolis, Ind.) had a career-high 15 tackles and eight solo stops in the Cardinals' 38-31 win over Eastern Michigan. Through three games Martin leads the MAC in total tackles (37) and is third in solo stops (19).

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## Davey O'Brien Award – nation's best quarterback

The Davey O'Brien Foundation announced North Carolina QB **Sam Howell** as its Player of the Week after he set UNC single-game records for passing yards (550), passing TD's (six) and total TD's (seven) in the Tar Heels' 59-53 comeback win over Wake Forest. The six TD passes tie the ACC record and the 550 yards are third in conference history. Howell (#7, So., Indian Trail, N.C.) hit 32 of 45 pass attempts (71.1 percent) and rushed for 21 yards, including the go-ahead TD with 4:11 remaining. He accounted for 571 of UNC's 742 total yards (76.9 percent) as the Tar Heels scored 35 unanswered points to overcome a 21-point third-quarter deficit, matching the largest comeback in school history. This is his second appearance on the Davey O'Brien Great 8 List. The other seven from this week are: **Ian Book** of Notre Dame, **Matt Corral** of Ole Miss, **Frank Harris** of UTSA, **Tyler Shough** of Oregon, **Zach Smith** of Tulsa, **Kyle Trask** of Florida and **Grant Wells** of Marshall.

Anyone wish to guess who leads the nation in per-carry rushing average among all players who have four or more games played? It's Cincinnati QB **Desmond Ridder** (#9, Jr., Louisville, Ky.), whose 8.85 yards per carry are seventh nationally but tops for those beyond three games played.

## Doak Walker Award – nation's premier running back

Some interesting numbers from running backs as the regular season begins its final weeks. **Breece Hall** of Iowa State (#28, So., Wichita, Kan.) is the nation's only 1,000-yard rusher to date and has run for more than 100 yards in all seven games this season. Hall's 13 rushing TD's are tied for first nationally as Iowa State leads the Big 12 in rushing (200.3 ypg) and is one of four FBS teams to score at least two rushing TD's in every game among teams with at least five games played. Minnesota's **Mohamed Ibrahim** (#24, Jr., Baltimore, Md.) continues to lead the country in rushing yards per game at 178.75 ypg, and despite a 35-7 loss to Iowa last week still ran for 144 yards on 33 carries. His 32.5 carries per game also lead the nation. The TD leader is **Javonte Williams** of North Carolina (#25, Jr., Wallace, N.C.) with 15 through the eight games he's played. **Leddie Brown** (#4, Jr., Philadelphia, Pa.) of West Virginia is the all-purpose touches leader with 192 plays, and his 135.1 yards per game is tops in the country with 897 rushing yards and 184 receiving. Brown (1,081 total yards, third nationally), UTSA's **Sincere McCormick** (1,030, fourth), Hall (1,122, second) and SMU's **Ulysses Bentley IV** (1,010, fifth) have toted the ball more than 175 times this season, with national all-purpose yardage leader **Travis Etienne** of Clemson just behind with 164 plays going for 1,301 yards.

## Heisman Trophy – nation's most outstanding player

Clemson is back in action this week at Florida State looking to start another week streak two weeks after losing its 36-game regular-season streak at Notre Dame. So it's time to check in again with our two Heisman candidates, **Trevor Lawrence** and **Travis Etienne**. As for Lawrence (#16, Jr., Cartersville, Ga.), he can tie the Clemson record for career wins by a starting QB and share it for the moment with four others. Lawrence can record his 19th career game with three or more passing TD's on Saturday – and the Tigers are 18-0 when he throws three or more. Clemson is 17th in total offense nationally, which sounds low but it's still cranking out 503.6 ypg and 45.4 ppg against almost entirely ACC opposition. This week's game is timely, as Clemson (with Lawrence at the helm for all but two games) has scored at least 34 points in each of its eight games and can join the 2013 BCS Champion Florida State team as the only ACC teams to ever score 34 or more in its first nine games of a season. One of Lawrence's favorite targets has been Etienne (#9, Sr., Jennings, La.), who is second on the team in both receptions (37) and receiving yards (491). Etienne is only the fourth FBS player since 2000 to post 600 rushing yards and at least 450 receiving yards through the first eight games of a season.

## John Mackey Award – nation's most outstanding tight end

The award gave its Tight End of the week to **Pat Freiermuth** of Penn State, who caught seven passes for 113 yards with a long play of 74 yards. Freiermuth (#87, Jr., Merrimac, Mass.) has caught at least one pass in 29 consecutive games, which is tied for the national lead among tight ends. He is seventh in the Big Ten with 5.8 receptions per game (46th nationally) and ninth in the Big Ten in receiving yards at 77.5 (55th nationally). Honorable mention for the week goes to **Hunter Long** of Boston College and **Jake Ferguson** of Wisconsin.

## Lou Groza Award – nation's top placekicker

The Palm Beach County Sports Commission recognized three kickers as its Stars of the Week. Texas Tech notched a 24-23 win over Baylor when kicker **Jonathan Garibay** (#46, Jr., Rubidoux, Calif.) nailed a 25-yard field goal as time expired. Garibay is the first Texas Tech kicker to make four FG's in a game (48, 28, 46 and 25) since 2013 and its first game-winner since 2012. **James McCourt** (#17, Sr., Parkland, Fla.) hit a 47-yard FG with three seconds left that gave Illinois a 23-20 road win at Rutgers. McCourt got a third chance at a fourth-quarter FG try after missing the first two, as the game-winner completed an 11-point game. Georgia Southern outlasted Texas State 40-38 as **Alex Raynor** (#99, Fr., Kennesaw, Ga.) became the week's top-scoring kicker with 16 points off FG's of 41, 39, 34 and 20 yards. He is 25-for-25 on PAT's on the season and leads the Eagles with 61 points.

## Maxwell Award – nation's player of the year

The Maxwell Football Club's Player of the Week went to Florida QB **Kyle Trask** for a second consecutive time. Trask (#11, Sr., Manvel, Texas)

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threw six TD passes among 356 yards in the Gators' 63-35 win over Arkansas, completing 23 of 29 passes without an interception against a defense that was 24th nationally in pass efficiency defense and came into the game third in the SEC in turnover margin at plus-8. Trask, who has now thrown for 830 yards and 10 TD's the past two games, was already on this season's Maxwell Award Watch List, but now has one of his favorite targets, junior tight end **Kyle Pitts**, joining him as the MFC expanded its Watch List by 13 players earlier this week based on their 2020 performances to date. Joining Pitts as additions to the Watch List were: **Tank Bigsby**, RB, Fr., Auburn; **Breece Hall**, RB, So., Iowa State; **Khalil Herbert**, RB, Sr., Virginia Tech; **Mohamed Ibrahim**, RB, Jr., Minnesota; **Mac Jones**, QB, Jr., Alabama; **Grayson McCall**, QB, Fr., Coastal Carolina; **Elijah Moore**, WR, Jr., Ole Miss; **Spencer Rattler**, QB, Fr., Oklahoma; **Desmond Ridder**, QB, Jr., Cincinnati; **Grant Wells**, QB, Fr., Marshall; **Javonte Williams**, RB, Jr., North Carolina; and **Malik Willis**, QB, Jr., Liberty.

## Outland Trophy – nation's most outstanding interior lineman

With Clemson QB Trevor Lawrence back in action and the Tigers coming off their first regular-season loss in three calendar years, some of the attention also needs to go up front where left tackle **Jackson Carman** (#79, Jr., Fairfield, Ohio) will protect Lawrence as well as RB Travis Etienne as the Tigers travel to Florida State. Behind Carman's leadership up front, Clemson has scored at least 34 points in each of its first eight games and can post 400 yards of offense in each of its first nine games for only the second time on record (also 2018). On the other side of the ball Saturday was to be Marvin Wilson, FSU's standout defensive tackle. Wilson was injured Oct. 24 against Louisville and surgery two weeks ago has ended his season.

It seems like forever since we've heard from Alabama, which had an idle week Nov. 7 before having last week's blockbuster at LSU postponed. Here's a refresher of what Watch List members and offensive guard **Deonte Brown** (#65, Sr., Decatur, Ala.), center **Landon Dickerson** (#69, Sr., Hickory, N.C.) and left tackle **Alex Leatherwood** (#70, Sr., Pensacola, Fla.) have done up front for the Crimson Tide. Alabama is third nationally in scoring offense at 47.2 points per game but tops among teams with four of more games played. The Tide average 555.2 yards per game (7th nationally) and have topped 500 yards in four of their six games this season and just missed with 499 last time out in a 41-0 romp over Mississippi State. Bama faces the SEC's 4th-best defense this week hosting Kentucky, which gives up 362.7 yards per game.

## Paul Hornung Award – most versatile player in college football

Four offensive players and return specialists who led their teams to wins last week make up this week's Paul Hornung Award Honor Roll. North Carolina RB/RS **Michael Carter** (#8, Sr., Navarre, Fla.) had 18 touches three different ways and a TD in a 59-53 shootout over Wake Forest. Carter ran 16 times for 74 yards and caught four passes for 55 yards, including a highlight 46-yard TD reception that sparked UNC's 21-point comeback. He also returned a kickoff. Ball State WR/RS **Justin Hall** (#11, Sr., Douglasville, Ga.) racked up 241 all-purpose yards in a 38-31 home win over Eastern Michigan. Hall had 15 touches three different ways, catching seven passes for 55 yards, rushing four times for 70 yards and returning four kickoffs for 116 yards. Ole Miss WR/RS **Elijah Moore** (#8, Jr., Fort Lauderdale, Fla.) touched the ball 19 times for 270 all-purpose yards and two TD's in a 59-42 win over South Carolina. Moore was the Rebels' leading receiver with 225 yards that included a 91-yard TD pass that became the game-winner, and its second-leading rusher with 45 yards. Louisiana RB/RS **Chris Smith** (#21, So., Louisville, Miss.) had nine touches three different ways to account for 159 all-purpose yards and a TD in a 38-10 win over South Alabama. Smith had nine carries for 99 yards with a 22-yard TD run, caught a pass for 10 yards, returned two kickoffs for 49 yards and created four first downs.

Fans can vote for their favorite player during the regular season and again during the bowl season at [louisvillesports.org/paul-hornung/award-poll/](https://louisvillesports.org/paul-hornung/award-poll/). Online fan voting powered by Texas Roadhouse is open and factors into the selection of the finalists and winner.

## Paycom Jim Thorpe Award – nation's best defensive back

**Rashad Wisdom** of UTSA was named the award's National Player of the Week following a 52-21 win over UTEP in which he posted nine tackles and forced a pair of fumbles. Wisdom (#0, So., Converse, Texas), a safety, had seven solo stops among his team-high tackles, helping UTSA hold UTEP to 246 yards of offense. He became the 14th FBS player this season to cause two fumbles in a game, including one that led to a Roadrunners TD as they pulled away, 38-21. Wisdom is third in C-USA with 72 tackles, 12th nationally.

## Ray Guy Award – nation's best punter

The Augusta Sports Council announced **Lou Hedley** of Miami as its Punter of the Week. Hedley (#94, Jr., Mandurah, Australia) punted seven times for 367 yards in a 25-24 road win over Virginia Tech. His gross average was 52.43 yards and three of his punts downed inside the Hokies' 20-yard line with a long punt of 58 yards. Hedley is currently fifth in the nation with a 47.45 per-punt average and his 38 boots are 10th. The other members of Ray's 4 this week were **Matthew Hayball** of FAU, **Blake Hayes** of Illinois and **Ivan Mora** of Wake Forest.

## Rimington Trophy – nation's premier center

Texas A&M is idle this week since its home game against Ole Miss was postponed due to SEC quarantine regulations. It wiped a potential offensive showcase off the schedule for the Aggies, who rank 5th in the SEC at 443.7 ypg, facing Ole Miss' last-place SEC defense. But it

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gives us a chance to catch up with its center, **Ryan McCallum** (#77, Gr., Spring, Texas), who has helped the No. 5 Aggies climb to national prominence. McCallum has helped push QB Kellen Mond into record territory as this season the senior QB has become A&M's all-time leader in career passing yards (8,847), completions (730) and attempts (1,243) and in his last game Nov. 7 at South Carolina threw his 68th TD pass to set another school record and tie his career high with four TD's. McCallum was a team captain for that South Carolina game and helped A&M rack up 500 yards of offense for the second time this season with 530 yards. Also, the Aggies' offensive front with McCallum calling the assignments did not give up a sack for a fifth straight game, a span of 171 pass attempts. Texas A&M in second in the nation with a 62.0 conversion rate on 3rd-down plays but tops at 68.75 percent against top 25 opponents.

## Walter Camp Award – nation's most outstanding player

The National Defensive Player of the Week went to **Jarell White** of Cincinnati, who had seven tackles and a sack, a quarterback hurry in a 55-17 win over East Carolina. White (#8, Sr., Cincinnati, Ohio) also had a highlight play with a 26-yard interception return that was his first career TD and sparked the Bearcats' 19th consecutive home win. White leads The American with 9.3 tackles per game. **Sam Howell** (#7, So., Indian Trail, N.C.) of North Carolina quarterbacked the Tar Heels to a wild 59-53 win over Wake Forest that included a 21-point comeback from the third quarter on. Howell broke school records for passing yards (550), TD passes (six, also tying the ACC record) and total TD's (seven) in the win.

## William V. Campbell Trophy – nation's premier scholar-athlete

The National Football Foundation (NFF) & College Hall of Fame recently announced its 12 finalists for the 2020 William V. Campbell Trophy® Presented by Mazda. Selected from a record 199 semifinalists from among all NCAA divisions and the NAIA, the 12 finalists are: **Tyler Bradfield** (LB, Grand Valley State), **Sam Ehlinger** (QB, Texas), **Jack Gibbens** (LB, Abilene Christian), **Ezra Gray** (RB, Alabama State), **Tyriq Harris** (DE, Charlotte), **Drew Himmelman** (OT, Illinois State), **Tyler Howerton** (OL, Hampden-Sydney), **Kekaula Kaniho** (DB, Boise State), **Brandon Kennedy** (OL, Tennessee), **Cameron Kinley** (CB, Navy), **Elijah Molden** (DB, Washington) and **Brady White** (QB, Memphis).

## Wuerffel Trophy – exemplary community service and academic achievement

The Wuerffel Trophy announced its 2020 nomination list from college football's Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS). Some of the notable returning nominees include 2019 semifinalists **Teton Saltes**, an offensive tackle at New Mexico, and **Sam Ehlinger**, a quarterback at Texas. Also back on the list are 2019 nominees **Michael Saffell** (C, California), **Tyriq Harris** (DE, Charlotte), **Brady White** (QB, Memphis), **Zach McCloud** (LB, Miami), **Mac Brown** (P, Ole Miss), **Kobe Jones** (DE, Mississippi State), **Ben Stille** (DL, Nebraska) and **Brian Ankersen** (C, South Alabama). The complete list of the nominees is at [wuerffeltrophy.org](http://wuerffeltrophy.org). The formal announcement of the 2020 recipient is anticipated to be made the week of Dec. 26.

– Compiled by Scott Farrell of [collegepressbox.com](http://collegepressbox.com)