

# HEAVY METAL: THE NCFAA NEWSLETTER (OCT. 16, 2020)

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

The Maxwell Football Club honored Georgia linebacker **Monty Rice** (#32, Sr., Huntsville, Ala.) with its Player of the Week award. Rice led the Bulldogs in tackles and scored his first career TD in Georgia's 44-21 win over Tennessee. His eight tackles led Georgia for the second straight game and included two TFL's. One of the TFL's was a strip-sack that he recovered and returned 20 yards for the Bulldogs' final score. Rice directed a defense that held the Vols to minus-1 yard rushing and scoreless in the second half.

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

Boston College wide receiver **Zay Flowers** (#4, So., Fort Lauderdale, Fla.) posted his second 100-yard game of the season with six catches for 162 yards and a career-high three TD's in a 31-30 overtime win vs. Pitt. The three TD's tied a single-game school record. UCF receivers **Marlon Williams** (#6, Sr., Mobile, Ala.) and **Jaylon Robinson** (#1, So., Fort Worth, Texas) are fourth and fifth, respectively, on the nation's receiving yardage list at 129.3 and 122.0 ypg. Robinson has been over 100 yards in all three games. Both are deep threats and have combined for 13 catches (Williams 7, Robinson 6) of 20 or more yards this season. Williams' 32 receptions are fourth nationally. Expect an explosive game Saturday at Memphis, which UCF has beaten 13 consecutive times. Ole Miss tight end **Kenny Yeboah** (#84, Sr., Allentown, Pa.) set a school record with 181 receiving yards, the most ever by a Rebels tight end, and now leads the nation's tight ends at 118.3 ypg. Yeboah is second among the Rebels in both yards (355) and receptions (15) and he's scored a TD in all three games. BYU receiver **Gunner Romney** (#18, Jr., Chandler, Ariz.) is 10th in the nation in receiving at 113.3 ypg. Romney will have a prime matchup Friday night against Houston's **Marquez Stevenson** (#5, Sr., Shreveport, La.), already a Watch List member, who posted a ninth career 100-yard game (5-for-144) in the Cougars' season-opening win over Tulane. **Caleb Chapman** (#81, So., Friendswood, Texas) of Texas A&M scored the game-winning TD on a 51-yard bomb with 4:30 to play as the Aggies toppled Florida. Chapman's nine catches on 12 targets gave the Aggies a 150-yard rusher and receiver in the same game for the first time.

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

The FWA gave Missouri linebacker **Nick Bolton** (#32, Jr., Frisco, Texas) its National Defensive Player of the Week honor after his team-high 11 tackles on a Mizzou defense that held LSU to only 49 rushing yards in a 45-41 win. Paramount was the third of his three pass break-ups that came on third down during a decisive goal-line stand as Mizzou stood firm from its one-yard line for four consecutive plays. The team captain is now tied for second in the nation in tackles per game (12.0) but ties for the national lead among players with three or more games. His 36 total tackles tie him for seventh overall nationally. Bolton had a career-high 17-tackle game Oct. 3 against Tennessee that was Mizzou's second-highest tackle count since 2000. Watch List member **Patrick Jones II** (#91, Sr., Chesapeake, Va.) of Pitt had three sacks for 40 yards in losses against Boston College last week and now leads the ACC with seven on the year, seventh nationally at 1.40 spg.

## **Burlsworth Trophy – most outstanding player who started his career as a walk-on**

The Burlsworth Trophy has pushed the dates forward for all nominations – now due by Nov. 18. The top 10 finalists will be announced on Dec. 1 with the three finalists being announced Dec. 8. The Burlsworth Trophy ceremony will be Dec. 21 either live or virtually.

## **Butkus Award – nation's best linebacker**

Returning freshman All-American **Azeez Ojulari** (#13, So., Marietta, Ga.) posted perhaps the finest game of his young Georgia career last week with two sacks for a loss of 20 yards, two forced fumbles and a fumble recovery as the 'Dawgs took down Tennessee. Ojulari (pronounced ah-ZEEZ Oju-LAHREE) has a team-high six TFL's, all of which have come in the last two games against No. 7 Auburn and No. 14 Tennessee. His 5.5 sacks led Georgia in 2019. Texas A&M LB **Buddy Johnson** (#1, Sr., Dallas, Texas) matched his career high with 11 tackles against Florida, marking the fourth time in his career he has reached double figures in the category and the third straight game he has led the team this season. Marshall LB **Tavante Beckett** (#4, Sr., Chesapeake, Va.) tied a school record with three fumble recoveries the Herd's 38-14 win at WKU, the last one resulting in a 38-yard TD return. All three turnovers led directly to Thundering Herd TD's. Beckett has five career fumble recoveries in 16 games.

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

The Davey O'Brien Foundation announced Missouri redshirt freshman **Connor Bazelak** (#8, Fr., Dayton, Ohio) as its National Quarterback of the Week for the Oct. 10 weekend. Making his second career start and first of 2020, Bazelak threw nearly as many touchdown passes (4) as incompletions (5) as Mizzou beat LSU, 45-41, for its first win over a defending national champion since 1978. Bazelak finished the day 29-for-34 for 406 yards with the four scores against no interceptions. His completion percentage (85.3) was the best against an FBS opponent in school history, and his passer rating of 242.4 is sixth in program history and was the best by a Mizzou QB ever in an SEC game. Joining Bazelak in the Great 8 last week were: Georgia's **Stetson Bennett**, North Carolina's **Sam Howell**, Ala-

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bama's **Mac Jones**, Boston College's **Phil Jurkovec**, Clemson's **Trevor Lawrence**, Texas A&M's **Kellen Mond** and Troy's **Gunnar Watson**. Mond became A&M's all-time leader in career passing yards leader with 338 yards in a win over Florida. He now has 8,224 career yards and already holds A&M career records in completions (680) and attempts (1,168). Watson posted career highs with 338 yards, four TD's and a 71.7 completion rate to 10 different receivers in a win over Texas State.

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

North Carolina running back **Michael Carter** (#8, Sr., Navarre, Fla.) had a career-best performance in a 56-45 win over Virginia Tech with 214 rushing yards on only 17 attempts with two TD's. Carter is the first UNC back to go over 200 yards since Elijah Hood's 220 against N.C. State in 2015. Carter had 251 all-purpose yards adding in his receiving yards and a kick return. Alabama running back **Najee Harris** (#22, Sr., Antioch, Calif.) gained more than one-third of the Tide's 723 total yards in a wild 63-48 win at Ole Miss. Harris ran for a career-best 206 yards on 23 carries – an average of 9.0 ypc – and tied the school record with five rushing TD's on runs of 5, 33, 3, 16 and 39 yards. He was a part of 10 first-down plays. His 10 rushing TD's lead the nation. Oklahoma's **T.J. Pledger** (#5, Jr., Pacoima, Calif.) posted a career-high 131 yards and two TD's in the 53-45 Red River Showdown win. He also had two catches for 24 yards. Charlotte running back **Aaron McAllister** (#15, So., Bradenton, Fla.) had a career-best 214 yards of total offense (140 rushing, 74 receiving) that included a 71-yard TD catch and a 66-yard TD run.

## Heisman Trophy – nation's most outstanding player

Clemson QB **Trevor Lawrence** (#16, Jr., Cartersville, Ga.) completed 29 of 41 passes – both season-highs – for 292 yards and three TD's in a key 42-17 win over No. 7 Miami. He added 34 rushing yards and another TD. It was Lawrence's 17th career game with three or more passing TD's, second in school history. Alabama RB **Najee Harris** (#22, Sr., Antioch, Calif.) leads the nation with 10 rushing TD's, five of them from last week in a 63-48 win at Ole Miss. Harris had 248 all-purpose yards – a career-best 206 rushing yards and 42 receiving – and had eight explosive plays of at least 12 yards. He scored on plays of 5, 33, 3, 16 and 39 yards. The five TD's on the ground tied an Alabama record.

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

Ole Miss TE **Kenny Yeboah** (#84, Sr., Allentown, Pa.) rewrote some of the school's record book last week despite a 63-48 loss vs. Alabama to earn the award's Tight End of the Week. The Temple transfer's 181 receiving yards were the most ever by an Ole Miss tight end and give him the current national lead among tight ends with 118.3 yards per game. Yeboah is second among the Rebels in both yards (355) and receptions (15) and he's scored a TD in all three games.

## Lou Groza Award – nation's top placekicker

The Palm Beach County Sports Commission recognized three kickers as its Stars of the Week. Georgia's **Jack Podlesny** (#96, So., St. Simons Island, Ga.) kicked two career-long field goals in a 44-21 win over Tennessee. His 47-yarder gave the Dawgs a 17-14 lead, and then he set a new long with a 51-yarder to regain a Georgia lead at 23-21. He is 7-of-8 on field goals through three games and leads the team in scoring with 32 points. East Carolina kicker **Jake Verity** (#9, Sr., Bremen, Ga.) became the Pirates' all-time leading scorer with a 14-point game in ECU's 44-24 win at USF. The 2019 Lou Groza semifinalist – the active leader among FBS kickers with 66 career field goals – hit from 42, 37 and 25 yards to bring his season total to 14 points. His now-school-record career total is 309 points. He is the fifth kicker in AAC history to pass 300 career points. Auburn's leading scorer (21 points) is kicker **Anders Carlson** (#26, Jr., Colorado Springs, Colo.), who nailed a 39-yard game-winner with 20 seconds left in last week's 30-28 win over Arkansas. The 12-point game included other field goals from 47 and 25 yards. The game-winner was a second-chance kick from a 34-yarder Carlson had missed minutes earlier in the fourth quarter. He is the younger brother of three-time Lou Groza finalist Daniel Carlson. UTSA's **Hunter Duplessis** (#48, Sr., San Antonio, Texas) is 11-for-11 on field goals to date, three more makes than anyone else nationally.

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

Alabama RB **Najee Harris** (#22, Sr., Antioch, Calif.) was named the award's Player of the Week after his outstanding performance in the 63-48 win at Ole Miss. The senior gashed the Rebels for 206 yards and five TD's on 23 carries. He broke off three runs of 30-plus yards, including a 39- and 33-yard TD's. Prior to the matchup, Harris never had a scoring run longer than 17 yards. Harris (6-2, 230 lbs.) averaged 9.0 yards per carry. He displayed his power, speed, balance, hurdling ability and other traits he fine-tuned over the summer with former Auburn running back Brad Lester. Harris also caught three passes for 42 yards. No. 2 Alabama faces No. 3 Georgia on Saturday.

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

South Carolina guard **Sadarius Hutcherson** (#50, Sr., Huntingdon, Tenn.) led the Gamecocks' 289-rushing yards effort in a 41-7 win

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at Vanderbilt. South Carolina averaged 7.4 yards per carry to post its highest rushing total against an FBS opponent since 2001. The Gamecocks rolled up 485 total yards behind the fifth-year senior, who graded out at 88 percent with seven knockdowns and no missed assignments. There are a season-high eight games this weekend featuring teams that both have Outland Watch List members, highlighted by five in the Georgia-Alabama game but containing teams from five of the six conferences currently competing.

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

Four skill position players who double as return specialists earned the Honor Roll nods this week, combining for 963 all-purpose yards and six touchdowns. Auburn true freshman **Tank Bigsby** (#4, Fr., LaGrange, Ga.) had 28 touches for 268 all-purpose yards, paced by 20 carries for 146 yards. He accounted for seven first downs and returned four kickoffs for 106 yards. North Carolina running back **Michael Carter** (#8, Sr., Navarre, Fla.) had 254 all-purpose yards and two TD's in a 56-46 win over Virginia Tech. His 17 carries went for 214 yards and nine first downs with a 62-yarder. Alabama wide receiver **Devonta Smith** (#6, Sr. Amite, La.) grabbed notice with 13 receptions for 134 yards and a TD, and added a rushing TD and 42 return yards in a 63-48 win at Ole Miss. His 15 touches went for 220 all-purpose yards. Houston opened its season with a burst from wide receiver **Marquez Stevenson** (#5, Sr., Shreveport, La.), whose seven touches went for 224 all-purpose yards in a 49-31 win over Tulane. Stevenson had a 97-yard kickoff return for a TD in the third quarter and a 14-yard TD reception in the fourth as the Cougars pulled away. He had five receptions for 144 yards and one rush for eight.

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

A pick-six by Kansas State safety **AJ Parker** (#12, Sr., Bartlesville, Okla.) was the clincher in a 21-14 win at TCU. Late in the third quarter, Parker snagged a TCU pass and returned it 37 yards for a TD to push K-State's lead to 21-7. It was the first interception return TD of his career and the first for K-State since 2017. The Wildcats defense held TCU to seven points in each half behind Parker's six tackles to go along with a pass break-up in the fourth quarter. Parker has six career interceptions and is tied for 11th nationally in passes defended (1.67 per game). Miami safety **Bubba Bolden** (#21, Jr., Las Vegas, Nev.) posted an outstanding game against No. 1 Clemson, tallying a game-high 10 tackles, forcing a fumble that Miami recovered, and blocked two field goals on special teams.

## **Ray Guy Award – nation's best punter**

The Augusta Sports Council announced Tennessee's **Paxton Brooks** (#37, Jr., Lexington, S.C.) as its Punter of the Week for the Oct. 10 games. Brooks punted six times during against Georgia for a total of 283 yards and a gross average of 47.2 yards. Three of his punts ended up inside UGA's 20-yard line with a long of 55 yards. Other members of Ray's 4 last week were **Lou Hedley** of Miami; **Kyle Ulbrich** of Middle Tennessee and **Zach Von Rosenburg** of LSU. Duke's **Porter Wilson** (#98, Fr., Fairlawn, Ohio) was added to the Ray Guy Watch List on Tuesday after another outstanding week. The redshirt freshman has punted 24 times for a 43.71-yard average (21st nationally) with nine of them being downed inside opponents' 20-yard line. His first collegiate kick at Notre Dame went for 60 yards.

## **Rimington Trophy – nation's premier center**

The Rimington Trophy Committee revealed its 2020 Watch List this week after accepting all nominations from eligible Division I programs, with the goal of highlighting as many collegiate centers as possible. It withheld its list until all conferences had completed a scheduling plan. Included on the 90-player list are eight players from the Big Ten, which has claimed three of the past four Rimington winners, 13 of 14 starters from the ACC and SEC schools, eight from the Pac-12, Big 12, C-USA and Sun Belt, followed by the MAC (7), American Athletic (6), Mountain West (6) and Independents (5). From the Watch List is North Carolina center **Brian Anderson** (#68, Jr., Montgomery, Ala.), who last week helped the Tar Heels rack up 399 rushing yards and 656 total yards – the fifth-highest total in school history – in a 56-45 win over Virginia Tech. UNC only surrendered one sack to a Tech team that entered the game second in nation in sacks with 13 (6.5 per game). Anderson had seven knockdown blocks in the game.

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

Arkansas State LB **Justin Rice** (#18, Sr., Modesto, Calif.) earned the award's National Defensive Player of the Week after recording 12 tackles, 4.0 TFL's and 3.0 sacks in a 50-27 win over Central Arkansas. Rice is the first A-State player to ever be named a Walter Camp national player of the week. The TFL and sacks were career highs – the 4.0 TFL's tied the most single-game TFL's in the country this season and he now leads the nation with 9.5 tackles behind the line of scrimmage. He's had at least 2.5 TFL's in the last three A-State games. The 3.0 sacks were the most by any Sun Belt player this season. It was his ninth career game with 10 or more tackles. The National Offensive Player of the Week honor went to Alabama RB **Najee Harris** (#22, Sr., Antioch, Calif.), who scored a career-high five rushing TD's and posted 206 yards at Ole Miss on 23 carries. Harris leads the nation with 10 rushing TD's.

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

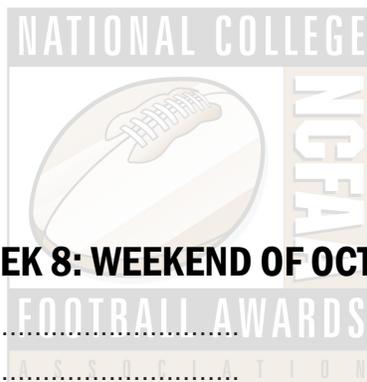
The National Football Foundation (NFF) & College Hall of Fame announced Tuesday that the 63rd NFF Annual Awards Dinner, originally

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scheduled to take place at the New York Hilton Midtown on Dec. 8, has been postponed due to the uncertainty created by the COVID-19 pandemic and the corresponding challenging economic environment. Normally serving as the culmination of the college football regular season, the NFF Annual Awards Dinner has taken place annually and uninterrupted since 1958 when sitting U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower attended the inaugural event to accept the NFF Gold Medal. The dinner also serves as the platform for the induction of the College Football Hall of Fame Class; the awarding of the NFF National Scholar-Athlete Awards Presented by Fidelity Investments; the announcement of the recipient of the William V. Campbell Trophy Presented by Mazda; and the presentation of the NFF major awards. Plans for honoring the 2020 College Football Hall of Fame Class will be announced at a later date.

## Wuerffel Trophy – exemplary community service and academic achievement

Five Wuerffel Trophy nominees will be on opposite sides of the ball Saturday in a rare single game on the Big 12 docket this weekend. West Virginia quarterback **Jarret Doege** along with wide receiver **Sam James** and safety **Sean Mahone** host Kansas and its two fine linemen, guard **Chris Hughes** and center **Api Mane**. Duke travels to N.C. State in an ACC matchup of Wuerffel nominees **Rakavius Chambers**, a Blue Devils guard, and punter **Trenton Gill** of the Wolfpack.



## WEEK 8: WEEKEND OF OCT. 19

Bednarik Award (Defense).....  
Biletnikoff Award (Receiver).....  
Bronko Nagurski Trophy (Defense).....  
Davey O’Brien Award (Quarterback).....  
Doak Walker Award (Running Back).....  
John Mackey Award (Tight End).....  
Lou Groza Award (Kicker).....

Maxwell Award.....  
Paul Hornung Award (All-Purpose).....

Paycom Jim Thorpe Award (Defensive Back).....  
Ray Guy Award (Punter).....  
Walter Camp Award (Offense).....  
Walter Camp Award (Defense).....