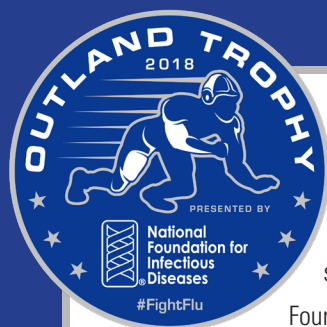


IN THE TRENCHES: WEEK 6 OUTLAND TROPHY MATCHUPS



PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES TEXAS VS. OKLAHOMA IN DALLAS, 12 P.M. ET ON FOX

This week we direct our Outland Trophy attention to one of the great college football traditions at the State Fair of Texas and the annual Texas-Oklahoma matchup. The Cotton Bowl will be rocking once again as both teams stare down staying in first place in the early Big 12 race.

Four Outland Trophy Watch List members will start this game as the Big 12's top-scoring offense (OU, 48.6 ppg) faces the league's second-best scoring defense (UT, 19.8 ppg). Oklahoma comes in red-hot on offense bolstered by an interior line consisting of guards **Dru Samia** (Sacramento, Calif.) and **Ben Powers** (Wichita, Kan.), along with left tackle **Bobby Evans** (Allen, Texas). They're part of a unit that is keeping Oklahoma producing at program-best levels. The Sooners are averaging a nation-leading 8.9 yards per snap – the FBS single-season record is 8.6 by Hawaii in 2006.

In last week's 66-33 win over Baylor, the offensive line helped Oklahoma set school records for yards per pass attempt (18.8), yards per completion (25.2) and pass efficiency rating (317.8). Its 11.2 yards per play tied as the third-best figure in program history. Quarterback Kyler Murray tied an Oklahoma record by accounting for seven touchdowns – six through the air – while throwing for 432 yards without an interception. Powers sat out last week's game with an injury but is expected back in the lineup Saturday.

Oklahoma's 48.6 points per game is eighth in the nation, and the Sooners have scored at least 30 points in 27 of their last 29 games and scored 29 and 28 points in the other two.

On the other side will be **Patrick Vahe** (Eules, Texas), the Longhorns' left guard who has 36 career starts up front. The 6-3, 325-pound senior has Texas' offense on track riding a four-game win streak, its longest since 2013. Vahe and the offensive line helped quarterback Sam Ehlinger set his career high for completion percentage last week at Kansas State (80.6), hitting 29-of-36 passes.

This is the first time since 2012 that both teams are ranked heading into the AT&T Red River Showdown. The Sooners have won six of the last eight meetings and 12 of the last 18.

AUBURN VS. MISSISSIPPI STATE, 7:30 P.M. ET ON ESPN2

In this annual SEC turf war, Outland eyes will be on the interior defensive line, where two of the country's top tackles face off in Mississippi State's **Jeffery Simmons** (Macon, Miss.) and Auburn's **Derrick Brown** (Sugar Hill, Ga.). Simmons (6-4, 300) leads the team and is second in the SEC and 19th nationally in tackles for loss this season with 7.5. The junior nose guard is currently tied for 10th in MSU history with 23.0 tackles for loss in his career and has recorded at least two TFLs in three of MSU's five games, including 3.5 against Stephen F. Austin.

MSU has an aggressive defensive front that's engaging to watch. Simmons (19.5) and defensive end Montez Sweat have 42 combined TFLs in the 18 career games they've played together, and 18 different Bulldogs have recorded at least 0.5 TFLs in five games thus far. Simmons has started 21 of the 30 games he's played in and is tied for sixth on the team with 21 total tackles. Watch out for Simmons on special teams as well. The last time the Bulldogs blocked a PAT or a punt, it was off Simmons' hands.

Brown, meanwhile, is approaching 100 career tackles (he has 89 at present) and is coming off an impressive game last week against Southern Miss. Brown matched career highs with two tackles for loss and had a sack for the fifth time in his career. The SEC Honor Roll member from the 2017 season posted a career-high nine tackles two weeks earlier against LSU.

The 6-5, 320-pound junior is tied for fourth on the team in total tackles with 21, and his 3.5 TFLs and two sacks have accounted for minus-44 yards lost for opponents.

OTHER MATCHUPS OF NOTE ...

- **Clemson at Wake Forest, 3:30 p.m. ET on ESPN:** There are five Watch List members on the field here, and while most eyes will watch the still-evolving Clemson quarterback situation, Outland eyes will be on what is regarded as the country's best overall interior defensive line at Clemson. **Christian Wilkins** (Springfield, Mass.) is making his 36th career start at tackle, nearing the Clemson record for career starts by a defensive tackle of 40 set by Jim Stuckey from 1976-79. The Tigers (including Wilkins' 12.0 sacks) are one of only four schools that can boast three active players with 10 or more career sacks. **Dexter Lawrence** (Wake Forest, N.C.) (9.5) could make it five on Saturday. It will be the charge of Wake Forest left guard **Phil Haynes** (Raleigh, N.C.) and center **Ryan Anderson** (Raleigh, N.C.) to contain Wilkins and Lawrence. Haynes and Anderson have been stalwarts on the Demon Deacons' offensive line with a combined 74 career starts. Clemson also boasts left tackle **Mitch Hyatt** (Suwanee, Ga.) and center **Justin Falcinelli** (Middleton, Md.) on the Outland Watch List.
- **Florida State at Miami, 3:30 p.m. ET on ABC:** This might be the toughest test yet for Miami defensive tackle **Gerald Willis III** (New Orleans, La.), who is tied for the national lead in tackles for loss at 10.5. Willis earned the Outland Trophy National Defensive Player of the Month for September with his fast start, and Saturday faces up against Florida State center **Alec Eberle** (Mechanicsville, Va.), the Seminoles' senior captain who has 37 consecutive starts over the ball.

Scott Farrell, collegepressbox.com

2018 OUTLAND TROPHY PRESEASON WATCH LIST

OL **Paul Adams**, Missouri@Paul_Adams77
 OL **Trey Adams**, Washington
 OL **Hakeem Adeniji**, Kansas
 C **Ryan Anderson**, Wake Forest
 OL **Alex Bars**, Notre Dame.....@AlexBars_
 OL **Ryan Bates**, Penn State @52batesryan
 DT **Terry Beckner**, Missouri @beckner_jr
 DT **Ryan Bee**, Marshall.....@r_bee91
 G **David Beedle**, Michigan State.....@Big_Bug90
 OL **Beau Benzschawel**, Wisconsin..... @BeauBench
 C **Tyler Biadasz**, Wisconsin @TylerBiadasz
 OL **Lanard Bonner**, Arkansas State
 G **Tyler Bowling**, Tulsa.....@T_Bowling72
 C **Garrett Bradbury**, N.C. State @Gbradbury_11
 OL **Parker Braun**, Georgia Tech
 OL **Ben Bredeson**, Michigan
 DT **Derrick Brown**, Auburn.....@DerrickBrownAU5
 C **Jesse Burkett**, Stanford
 OL **Yodny Cajuste**, West Virginia.....@YC_Rich4Ever
 DT **Marquise Copeland**, Cincinnati@Be_Steazy_
 C **Deontae Crumitie**, Troy.....@deontaecrumitie
 OL **Michael Deiter**, Wisconsin.....@MichaelDeiter
 OL **Tommy Doles**, Northwestern.....@TommyDoles
 OL **O'Shea Dugas**, Louisiana Tech.....@Osheadugas
 C **Alec Eberle**, Florida State@aleceberle54
 OL **David Edwards**, Wisconsin.....@d_edwards79
 OL **Bobby Evans**, Oklahoma.....@BobbyEvans44
 C **Justin Falcinelli**, Clemson.....@Jfalc50
 C **Lo Falemaka**, Utah.....@peterfalemaka
 OL **Hjalte Froholdt**, Arkansas@HFroholdt
 C **Lamont Gaillard**, Georgia
 DT **Greg Gaines**, Washington@GregGaines99
 C **Tyler Gauthier**, Miami
 DT **Youhanna Ghaifan**, Wyoming.....@yogaifhan81
 C **Jake Hanson**, Oregon.....@J_Hanson55
 OL **Phil Haynes**, Wake Forest@PhilHaynes95
 G **Nate Herbig**, Stanford@nate_herbig
 DT **Trysten Hill**, UCF
 OT **Mitch Hyatt**, Clemson@themitchhyatt
 OL **Martez Ivey**, Florida@tezeyey
 C **Jordan Johnson**, UCF

DT **Dre'Mont Jones**, Ohio State@TheOfficial_80
 OL **Michael Jordan**, Ohio State@BigMikeJ73
 OL **Luke Juriga**, Western Michigan.....@Luke_Juriga56
 C **John Keenoy**, Western Michigan.....@Keenoy_52
 OL **Marcus Keyes**, Oklahoma State
 C **Sean Krepsz**, Nevada@Skrepsz
 DT **Dexter Lawrence**, Clemson.....@llawrence2139
 G **Jimmy Leatiota**, Eastern Michigan
 DT **Ira Lewis**, Baylor
 DT **Ray Lima**, Iowa State
 OL **Chris Lindstrom**, Boston College@Big_Fish68
 OL **Greg Little**, Ole Miss.....@Thegreglittle
 C **Toa Lobendahn**, USC.....@T_Lo55
 OL **Joe Lowery**, Ohio.....@thejlow_65
 OL **Kaleb McGary**, Washington.....@steelers47kaleb
 C **Connor McGovern**, Penn State.....@Condor_McGovern
 OL **Patrick Mekari**, California@PattM5997
 C **Chandler Miller**, Tulsa
 DT **David Moe**, Boise State@moaconstrictor_
 C **Sam Mustipher**, Notre Dame.....@smustipher53
 C **Will Noble**, Houston@W_Noble
 OT **Marcus Norman**, USF@MarcusNorman77
 DT **Ed Oliver**, Houston@Edoliver_11
 C **Ross Pierschbacher**, Alabama@RossP71
 OL **Ben Powers**, Oklahoma@BigBen_72
 OL **Isaiah Prince**, Ohio State.....@ThePrince_59
 OL **Dalton Risner**, Kansas State@DaltonBigD71
 NT **Olive Sagapolu**, Wisconsin.....@OSagapolu
 OL **Dru Samia**, Oklahoma@DruSamia
 OT **Max Scharping**, NIU@MaxScharping
 DT **Jordon Scott**, Oregon
 DT **Jeffery Simmons**, Mississippi State ...@GrindSimmons94
 OL **Trey Smith**, Tennessee@smithtrey98
 OL **Trevon Tate**, Memphis@_TopSh0tta
 OL **Calvin Throckmorton**, Oregon.....@calthrock_54
 DT **Jerry Tillery**, Notre Dame.....@JerryTillery
 OL **Patrick Vahe**, Texas.....@PatrickVahe
 DT **Ricky Walker**, Virginia Tech
 DT **Christian Wilkins**, Clemson.....@cwilkins42
 OL **Jonah Williams**, Alabama@JonahGWilliams
 DT **Daniel Wise**, Kansas

By conference: American Athletic 9; ACC 12; Big 12 11; Big Ten 13; Conference USA 2; Mid-American 5; Mountain West 3; Pac-12 11; SEC 11; Sun Belt 2; Independents 3.

KEY DATES:

- Semifinalists: Wed., Nov. 14 (The Old Mattress Factory, Omaha, Neb.)
- Finalists: Tues., Nov. 20 (ESPN)
- Winner: Thurs., Dec. 6 (*The Home Depot College Football Awards* on ESPN)
- Award Banquet: Wed., Jan. 9 (Downtown DoubleTree Hotel, Omaha, Neb.)

ALL NCAA DIVISION I FBS INTERIOR LINEMEN ARE ELIGIBLE TO WIN THE OUTLAND TROPHY

