



Beano Cook receives Bert McGrane Award



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SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — The legendary Beano Cook has been named the 38th winner of the Football Writers Association of America's Bert McGrane Award.

The Bert McGrane Award, symbolic of the association's Hall of Fame, is presented to an FWAA member who has performed great service to the organization and/or the writing profession. It is named after McGrane, a Des Moines, Iowa, writer who was the executive secretary of the FWAA from the early 1940s until 1973.

Cook, 79, a college football commentator for ABC/ESPN since 1986, worked as a sports information director at Pittsburgh from 1956-66 and publicized college football for ABC from 1966-74. He did the same for CBS from 1977-82, then returned to ABC to work in front of the camera as a college football commentator before joining ESPN.

"I'm shocked," Cook said on an ESPN podcast. "The only person more shocked in recent years over getting picked was Sarah Palin. I've come to the conclusion that if you live long enough, you're going to get some type of award whether you deserve it or not."

The McGrane Award will be presented to Cook at the College Football Hall of Fame enshrinement ceremony next summer in South Bend, Ind.

"Beano has always been an institution of passion and knowledge for the sport," said Mark Blaudschun of the Boston Globe, who became chair of the McGrane Award after winning it in 2007.



Beano Cook

"College football has great stories, and we need Beano to tell them. He has no agenda, just his passion for the sport."

Cook has been an FWAA member since 1956 and became a part of the FWAA's 50-plus club in 2005 when, for the first time, the organization honored members of 50 years or more.

The FWAA has named a Bert McGrane Award winner since 1974. Several of the giants of the writing profession have won the award along with sports information directors, bowl officials and occasionally a person from an allied field in sports journalism.

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President's column



**TOMMY
HICKS**

With more than 1,200 members, the largest roster in our history, the Football Writers Association of America continues to grow and continues to gain strength.

Our strength in numbers couldn't come at a more important time.

With the ever-changing way in which we do busi-

ness – new media and social media, video blogs and reports and other reporting responsibilities, content sharing and the like – there has never been a more important time for us to join forces. It seems there are new ways and new challenges in how we go about our jobs with each new day. Some recent challenges, such as access to coaches and athletes, remain issues that require our attention.

As a group and working together, we have a greater voice, a greater opportunity not only to have our voice heard but also to affect change. The FWAA is more than just an organization of men and women who share the same profession, and with that the same hopes and goals, the same deadlines and issues. It's an organization that has proven over the years to be an advocate for our greater good in a number of areas. It is an organization that has proven to be open-minded, one that takes a stand and offers support when required.

Growing our membership isn't simply about tossing around stats in our support, but in gaining strength, in adding volume to our voice. Maintaining a presence and earning and solidifying that presence should continue to be one of our most important aims.

I look forward to serving as your FWAA president in the coming year and will be aware of the trust placed in me by you in this position. Still, I recognize I'm just one part of the process, one piece of

the puzzle. There are countless others who play equally important roles in our progress and our duties. I will be calling on many of you, as I have already done, for suggestions, guidance and assistance over the next year and I have learned that you are always willing to help. For that, I am very appreciative.

The FWAA is filled not only with true professionals, but with many good friends. That is a comfortable feeling for me as we all go forward. Thanks to past president Tim Griffin, not only for his solid work on our behalf, but for his suggestions, helpful hints and assistance. Ron Higgins continues to work overtime for our organization and he has been, and will continue to be, someone I call on often for advice. Others such as Wally Hall, George Schroeder, Ivan Maisel, Tony Barnhart and more have been a great help simply thanks to their friendship and past leadership.

In recent weeks, I have had a chance to see some of our work from a front row seat. The Bronko Nagurski award banquet in Charlotte was a special event and one in which we can be proud. The same is true of the Outland Trophy award banquet in Omaha. Both were well-run, popular events that allow us to have a more public presence.

We are continuing to work with the Marriott folks to continue our VIP program. That is a priority and another way in which membership in the FWAA provides a value. If you have received an email regarding this issue, please reply to it as quickly as possible. This is an issue where our membership numbers could be a key factor. Access will also continue to be a focal point this year with the hopes of making strides in that area.

I am proud to serve you as president; thank you for the opportunity.

If there is anything you wish to talk about or if you have a concern or issue you wish the organization to address, please feel free to contact me at thixx25@aol.com or phone me at (251) 610-7808. Steve Richardson, our executive director, also would like to hear from you at tigerfwaa@aol.com.

Auburn wins Grantland Rice Trophy after dramatic win over Oregon

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Following their 22-19 win over Oregon in the Tostitos BCS National Championship Game, the Auburn Tigers (14-0) were presented the 2010 Grantland Rice Trophy by the Football Writers Association of America. FWAA president Tommy Hicks of the Mobile Press-Register made the presentation to head coach Gene Chizik at a morning news conference.

A panel of 15 veteran FWAA members selected Auburn as the FWAA champion after the Tigers completed an unbeaten season when Wes Byrum kicked a 19-yard field goal as time expired.

Auburn, which has never won the FWAA national championship trophy, joins fellow SEC members Alabama (2009), Florida (2008), LSU (2007) and Florida (2006) in the five-year national championship reign by the league.

Oregon (12-1), the Pacific-10 champion, averaged nearly 50 points per game coming into the championship game, but was overmatched trying to contend with Auburn's defensive line that helped limit the Ducks to a season-low 81 rushing yards. Oregon led 11-7 in the second quarter before the Tigers stormed back to take a 16-11 lead at halftime and never again trailed.

Auburn's defense stiffened on an Oregon drive to the 1-yard line late in the third quarter, denying the Ducks a chance for a potential tying touchdown. Oregon would later tie the score with 2:33 left in the game before Auburn put together a 7-play, 73-yard drive for the winning field goal and its first national football championship of any kind since 1957.

"These guys represent Auburn on the field, off the field, in the community the right way," Chizik said after completing his second season. "We said that we wanted to go from good to great. And I can sit here tonight and I can tell you that Auburn - the Auburn Tigers are the best football team in the United States."

The Grantland Rice Trophy has been presented by the Football Writers Association of America to college football's national champion since 1954. Named for the legendary sportswriter, the Grantland Rice Trophy was the first national championship award to be presented after the college football postseason.

Although the FWAA does not conduct a final poll at the end of the season, it will conduct a 2011 preseason poll during the summer. The poll will be released in late August before the beginning of the upcoming season.

FWAA 2011 President Tommy Hicks of the *Mobile Press-Register* presents the Grantland Rice Trophy to Auburn coach Gene Chizik the morning after the Tigers defeated Oregon 22-19 in the BCS National Championship Game.



Mobile Press-Register's Hicks becomes FWAA's 68th president

Award-winning journalist Tommy Hicks has done quite well in the state of Alabama. He was born there 56 years ago and has spent his entire life in the state: growing up, going to college and earning a living as one of the region's best sports writers.

Hicks, a *Mobile Press-Register* columnist, became the FWAA's 68th President on January 10 in Scottsdale at the association's annual breakfast meeting. He began serving immediately and headed to Omaha for the Outland Trophy Presentation Banquet three days later. His first column appears in this Fifth Down.

Hicks, born in Phenix City, Alabama later graduated from Troy State University (now Troy University) in 1976 with a double major in art and journalism. He obviously decided the newspaper business was an easier way to make a living than being an artist and landed his first job at a weekly, his hometown newspaper.

In 1979 he became Sports Editor of The Selma

Times-Journal for a short period and then logged time through 1984 at The Montgomery Advertiser in various capacities inside and outside of sports before becoming the Auburn beat and golf writer at *The Anniston Star*. He joined his current paper in 1992 and it has been a long-time fit.

Hicks has won numerous FWAA Best Writing Contest Awards. He has been the National Sportscasters and Sportswriters Association Alabama Sportswriter of the Year three times, most recently in 2008. He has won various awards in the Alabama Sports Writers Association, APSE (Associated Press Sports Editors) and 11-state Sigma Delta Chi region's Green Eyeshade Awards. In 2005, he claimed Troy University's Hall School of Journalism Outstanding (Print) Alumnus Award.

Hicks, the father of a daughter, Maren, plays golf, reads and enjoys music, concerts and movies in his spare time.

Donald Hunt named recipient Of Volney Meece scholarship

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Donald Hunt, a sophomore at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, has been named the 14th winner of the Volney Meece Scholarship.

The scholarship is awarded annually by the Football Writers Association of America and named for the late Volney Meece. Meece served 22 years as the FWAA's executive director and was the organization's president in 1971.

The scholarship is a \$1,000 annual grant for four years. It is given to a deserving son or daughter of an FWAA member.

The 19-year-old Hunt is the son of FWAA member Donald Hunt, a staff member of the *Philadelphia Tribune* and also writes the HBCU Notebook for *espn.com*.

Donald's impressive academic record includes making the dean's list each semester at Berklee and named to the National Society of Leadership and Success (Berklee Chapter), while maintaining a 3.5 GPA. In high school, he achieved Eagle Scout status in the Boy Scouts of America; received the Greater Philadelphia Cappies Award for

Best Senior Male Critic; won Boy of the Year honors from the Sonny Hill Basketball League; and received the Superintendent's Award for Excellence.

In addition to his academic work, Donald is also a member of the Emerson College cross country team. He has completed internships at Clear Channel Communications in programming and sales, Ed Keane Associates in music industry marketing, and with the Handel and Haydn Society in marketing.

Previous Meece Scholarship winners include: Brett Goering, Topeka, Kan.; Kelly Brooks, Denver, Colo.; James Butz, Schaumburg, Ill.; Sara Barnhart, Atlanta, Ga.; Patrick Davis, Coventry, Conn.; Jacqueline O'Toole, Gaithersburg, Md.; Garrett Holtz, Denver, Colo.; Katie Hersom, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Katie Wieberg, Lawson, Mo.; Kaylynn Monroe, Winter Park, Fla.; Nate Kerkhoff, Overland Park, Kan.; Jack Caywood, Lawrence, Kan.; and Haley Dodd, Overland Park, Kan.

FWAA Freshman All-America Team

OFFENSE			
Pos.	Player, School	Height, Weight	Hometown
QB	Danny O'Brien, Maryland	6-3, 215	Kernersville, N.C.
RB	• Ronnie Hillman, San Diego St.	5-10, 175	La Habra, Calif.
RB	• Marcus Lattimore, South Carolina	6-0, 218	Duncan, S.C.
WR	Josh Boyce, TCU	6-0, 203	Copperas Cove, Texas
WR	• Marquess Wilson, Washington St.	6-3, 173	Tulare, Calif.
WR	• Robert Woods, USC	6-1, 185	Carson, Calif.
TE	Ted Bolser, Indiana	6-6, 252	Cincinnati, Ohio
T	• Seantrel Henderson, Miami	6-8, 330	St. Paul, Minn.
T	• Luke Joeckel, Texas A&M	6-6, 304	Arlington, Texas
G	Alvin Bailey, Arkansas	6-4, 323	Broken Arrow, Okla.
G	Will Jackson, Georgia Tech	6-3, 285	Knoxville, Tenn.
C	• James Stone, Tennessee	6-4, 295	Nashville, Tenn.

DEFENSE			
Pos.	Player, School	Height, Weight	Hometown
DE	• Damontre Moore, Texas A&M	6-4, 248	Rowlett, Texas
DE	• Junior Onyeali, Arizona St.	5-11, 233	Denver, Colo.
DT	• Roosevelt Nix, Kent State	6-0, 250	Reynoldsburg, Ohio
DT	Akeem Spence, Illinois	6-1, 305	Fort Walton Beach, Fla.
LB	• Shaun Lewis, Oklahoma St.	5-11, 212	Missouri City, Texas
LB	• C.J. Mosley, Alabama	6-2, 225	Theodore, Ala.
LB	• Keith Smith, San Jose St.	6-2, 225	Covina, Calif.
LB	Tom Wort, Oklahoma	6-1, 225	New Braunfels, Texas
CB	• Tyrann Mathieu, LSU	5-9, 180	New Orleans, La.
CB	Xavier Rhodes, Florida State	6-1, 209	Miami, Fla.
S	• Marco Nelson, Tulsa	6-0, 192	Glenpool, Okla.
S	• Ty Zimmerman, Kansas St.	6-1, 203	Junction City, Kan.

SPECIALISTS			
Pos.	Player, School	Height, Weight	Hometown
P	• Tom Hornsey, Memphis	6-3, 205	Geelong, Australia
K	• Ross Krautman, Syracuse	5-7, 154	Franklin Lakes, N.J.
PR	• Terrence Mitchell, USF	5-10, 165	Tampa, Fla.
KR	• Willie McNeal, Western Kentucky	5-10, 160	Bradenton, Fla.
• Indicates true freshman			

FIRST-YEAR COACH OF THE YEAR

Jimbo Fisher	Florida State
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Rutgers' LeGrand gets Courage Award

Rutgers defensive tackle Eric LeGrand has been named the winner of the 2010 Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award. LeGrand, a junior from Avenel, N.J., was paralyzed from the neck down Oct. 16, while making a tackle against Army. The award was presented on Jan. 3 at the Orange Bowl.

"This is a tremendous honor for Eric to receive the Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award," Rutgers coach Greg Schiano said. "Eric has displayed so much courage and determination throughout his injury and rehabilitation. He has given everyone associated with our football family at Rutgers the strength to persevere through life's challenges."

The most recent news is encouraging. LeGrand is continuing his rehabilitation at Kessler Institute in West Orange, N.J. He has been taken off a ventilator and is able to breathe on his own. His injury was recently reclassified from a complete spinal cord injury to an incomplete spinal cord injury.

LeGrand, a backup defensive tackle, suffered the injury while making a tackle on a kickoff during the fourth quarter. He collided with Army's Malcolm Brown, then lay motionless on the field for several minutes. He underwent emergency surgery to stabilize his spine. Damage was to the C-3 and C-4 level of the vertebrae.

"As I talked to our team, we are going to believe that Eric is going to walk onto that field again," Schiano said shortly after the injury.

The first few days after the injury, more than 18,000 e-mails to LeGrand were sent through the school's web-

site, ScarletKnights.com.

"We know it's going to be a long road," Schiano said a few days after the injury. "It's going to be one step at a time and we're going to do this as a family, the LeGrand family, the Rutgers football family. That's the way we are going to approach it."

The "Eric LeGrand Believe Fund" has been set up to help finance his treatment. For information, visit www.scarletknights.com/believe.

"We were deeply touched as a family to hear the news of Eric winning the Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award," the LeGrand family said in a statement. "Thank you to everyone at the Football Writers Association of America for selecting Eric. He continues every day to make positive steps and has attacked his rehabilitation with the same desire and passion as he did on the football field."

2010 Discover Orange Bowl Courage Award Nominees

- Sept. 29: Zac Etheridge, Auburn, and Rodney Scott, Ole Miss
- Oct. 6: Jon Hoese, Minnesota
- Oct. 13: Marquez Herrod, Colorado
- Oct. 20: Matt Anderson, North Dakota State
- Oct. 27: Jamie Hampton, Troy
- Nov. 3: Ricky Dobbs, Navy
- Nov. 17: Andrew Phillips, Stanford; Colter Phillips, Virginia; Paul Phillips, Indiana
- Nov. 24: Mississippi State football program
- Nov. 24: Eric LeGrand, Rutgers

ESPN The Magazine senior writer Gene Wojciechowski presents the Discover Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award to Nicole LeGrand, mother of 2010 winner Eric LeGrand on Jan. 3. LeGrand, a defensive tackle for Rutgers, was paralyzed while making a tackle against Army on Oct. 16. Also pictured are Orange Bowl member Nat Moore (left) and Rutgers coach Greg Schiano (right).

