

## Annual meeting, awards time

The Football Writers Association of America has selected winners of the Bronko Nagurski and Outland trophies and named its 25-man All-America team.

The FWAA also is preparing for its annual meeting Jan. 2-4 in Phoenix and selection of the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year award winner.

The Nagurski Trophy was claimed by Arizona State defensive end Terrell Suggs, who picked up the award on Dec. 9 at the Charlotte Touchdown Club Banquet.

The Outland Trophy went to Washington State defensive tackle Rien Long, who was named the winner on Dec. 12 in Orlando. Long also will be honored at the Omaha Sports Committee Banquet on Jan. 9 in Omaha.

The FWAA All-America team, which has been selected since 1944, was named in early December and appears on Pages 4-5 of the *Fifth Down*. The team is highlighted by three players each from Big Ten co-champions Iowa and Ohio State. For the first time, the entire team will be honored at a banquet hosted by Florida Citrus Sports on Jan. 24 in Orlando.

The four finalists for the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award (Page 3) are: Tyrone Willingham of Notre Dame, Kirk Ferentz of Iowa, Jim Tressel of Ohio State and Larry Coker of Miami (Fla.). FWAA members will be able to vote at [fwa.com](http://fwa.com) for their choice for coach of the year Award between Dec. 19 and Jan. 4.

The FWAA's annual meeting will be Jan. 2-4 at the Phoenix Airport Marriott Hotel in conjunction with the Bowl Championship Series 1-2 game at the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl. A schedule of events is on Page 8 of this *Fifth Down*.

The FWAA Board Meeting will be at 6:15 p.m. on Jan. 2 at a room to be designated at the hotel. An invitation only Past Presidents Dinner will be held the evening of Jan. 2. On Jan. 3, the FWAA's award breakfast/meeting will be at the Airport Marriott Hotel from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Big East commissioner Mike Tranchese, chairman of the BCS, will be available for a question-and-answer session at the breakfast.

The FWAA, in conjunction with *ESPN The Magazine*, will present the inaugural courage award to Toledo running back William Bratton, who overcame a serious blood disorder to play for the Rockets. He will be accompanied by Toledo coach Tom Amstutz.

The FWAA also will honor a deserving son or daughter of an FWAA member with the Volney Meece Scholarship, so named after the long-time executive director. Winners of best writing contest will be recognized and received certificates and cash prizes.

The presentation of the FWAA's Grantland Rice Super 16 Trophy is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Jan. 4 at the Airport Marriott Hotel. The FWAA has successfully conducted a poll during the 2002 football season and its 16 voters will determine the trophy winner in ballotting after the Fiesta Bowl game.



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# President's column



**KELLY  
WHITESIDE**

Just when you think life has finally cut you a break, comes this – a fractured ankle.

On Oct. 26, just when Toledo tailback William Bratton was on his way to a superb senior season, leading his team with 639 yards and 10 touchdowns, he broke his ankle against Miami of Ohio and missed the rest of the season.

Still, for a career of courage and perseverance, Bratton received the inaugural Football Writers Association of America Courage Award. Bratton was selected from a list of seven finalists by a committee of FWAA members.

Here's hoping he'll be healthy enough to play in the Motor City Bowl on Dec. 26, when the Rockets face Boston College.

Diagnosed with a blood disorder called sickle cell thalassemia at age 8, Bratton has endured a life of chronic and, at times, debilitating pain with the knowledge that the average life expectancy of African-Americans afflicted with this disease is the mid-40s.

All football players know what it's like to play with pain; Bratton doesn't know what it's like to play without it. At times, Bratton has been hospitalized for days. Earlier this season he missed a week's worth of practice because of a minor flare-up, but he still played that Saturday against Central Florida.

Bratton has had to be careful not

to overexert himself. When he does, his body aches because his blood can't get enough oxygen to his cells.

"The only thing they can try to do is ease the pain, and nothing helps," he once said. "I'm usually out for a week until the pain goes away. The pain is unbearable. When I have to, I just try to get a morphine shot, but that just helps for 10 to 15 minutes. All I can do is sit in discomfort. You don't get much sleep, an hour or two maybe."

Besides his daily struggles with the disease, Bratton had waited six years for the opportunity to start for the Rockets this season.

He arrived from Lima, Ohio, in 1997 and sat out the year as a partial qualifier. After redshirting in 1998, he played sparingly the following year. In 2000, he missed much of August practice because of his battle with sickle thalassemia.

Then last year, he played in just one game after he injured his back in the season opener. Finally, this year, he entered the season as the No. 1 tailback after the NCAA granted him a hardship waiver, allowing him to return for his sixth season.

Through it all, Bratton has persevered without complaint. We are honored that he is our first Courage Award recipient.

Thanks to the FWAA committee and most of all to *ESPN The Magazine's* Gene Wojciechowski, who spearheaded the award's inception.

Each year the winner will be announced in the magazine in December. Bratton will receive the award on Jan. 3 at the FWAA's annual meeting and awards breakfast in conjunction with the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl.

See you there.

# Finalists for Coach of the Year

Miami's Larry Coker, Iowa's Kirk Ferentz, Ohio State's Jim Tressel and Notre Dame's Tyrone Willingham were named finalists for the 2002 FWAA/Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award on Dec. 19.

The winner will be announced on Jan. 9 in Scottsdale, Ariz., on Fox Sports Net. The honoree will be named at a banquet hosted by the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl and America West Airlines. None of the finalists previously have won the Eddie Robinson/FWAA Award.

For the first time, FWAA members will be voting online for the winner at [fwaa.com](http://fwaa.com). Voting will start in late December and run through the Bowl Championships Series 1-2 game in Tempe, Ariz., between Miami and Ohio State. That showdown game between Division I-A's only two unbeaten teams will pit two of the FWAA-Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year finalists – Coker and Tressel – against each other.

Coker has never lost a game as a head coach. His Hurricanes went 12-0 in his 2001 rookie season. The season was capped by a lop-sided victory over Nebraska in the Rose Bowl.

He was the first rookie head coach in 53 years to coach his team to the national title and only the second ever to do so. His Miami team is 12-0 this season.

The Hurricanes have had to rally for several victories this season but have always managed to overcome some slow starts and have played flawlessly down the stretch in several big games.

"He is the most even-tempered person I have ever met," said Miami athletic director Paul Dee. "He has very little fluctuation between high and low, if any. He is a very focused individual – he knows what the task is."

Tressel, who was 7-5 last season with the Buckeyes, also is in his second season at Ohio State. He interviewed for the Miami (Fla.) job about 10 years ago when he was coach at Youngstown State and on the way to winning four Division I-AA championships.

This season, the Buckeyes' solid defense and a conservative offense were the keys to an unbeaten record.

Ohio State narrowly won at Purdue and Illinois and had a close game against Michigan in the finale. Ohio State has not won a national title since the 1968 season.

Tressel could be the man to do it again and place his name on the FWAA mantel along with Woody Hayes, who won this award in 1957, 1968 and 1975. Tressel graduated from Baldwin-Wallace College in 1975, the last year Hayes won this award.

Willingham led Notre Dame to a 10-2 regular-season record in 2002. And the Fighting Irish had visions of a playing for the national championship until late-season losses to Boston College and Southern California.

Even so, Willingham's 10 victories in his first season in South Bend are the most for any rookie Irish coach. He is the first Irish coach since Ara Parseghian in 1964 to start with eight straight victories.

The Fighting Irish, showing greater discipline than in recent years, played a tight defense, waited for turnovers and minimized mistakes on offense early in the season to build momentum. They defeated four ranked teams in a row – Maryland, Michigan, Air Force and Florida State.

"He's a disciplinarian whose players love him," Notre Dame athletics director Kevin White said of Willingham.

Ferentz, in his fourth season as Iowa's head coach, has slowly built up the Hawkeyes' program. Iowa played in the Alamo Bowl last season and beat Texas Tech to finish with a 7-5 record. That served as a springboard to the current season, which resulted in Big Ten co-championship and a berth in the Orange Bowl against Southern California.

The Hawkeyes went 9-0 in the Big Ten Conference and enter the Orange Bowl with a nine-game winning streak. Ohio State and Iowa did not play each other this season. The Hawkeyes' only loss of the regular season came to Iowa State, 36-31.

"Nobody deserves this more than coach," said Iowa offensive lineman Ben Sobieski.



Tyrone Willingham



Jim Tressel



Kirk Ferentz



Larry Coker

## FWAA ALL-AMERICAN OFFENSE



**Palmer**  
*USC*

Position	Player	School	Comment
Quarterback	Carson Palmer	USC	Played well vs. toughest schedule
Running back	Larry Johnson	Penn State	Over 2,000 yards rushing
Running back	Willis McGahee	Miami (Fla.)	Best clutch back in I-A
Wide receiver	Reggie Williams	Washington	Huge games down stretch
Wide receiver	Charles Rogers	Michigan St.	Caught TD pass in every game
Tight end	Dallas Clark	Iowa	Led TEs with 645 yards in catches
Offensive lineman	Jordan Gross	Utah	Pros drooling for draft chance
Offensive lineman	Shawn Andrews	Arkansas	A sophomore with strength
Offensive lineman	Brett Romberg	Miami (Fla.)	Heart and soul of 'Canes line
Offensive lineman	Bruce Nelson	Iowa	Top line reason for Iowa's turn-around
Offensive lineman	Derrick Dockery	Texas	Horns ran behind this draft gem
Place kicker	Nate Kaeding	Iowa	Made 90.9% of field goals
Kick returner	Derek Abney	Kentucky	Returned 6 kicks/punts for TDs



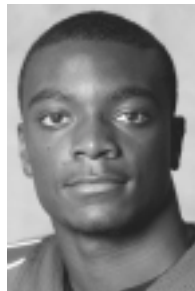
**Johnson**  
*Penn State*



**McGahee**  
*Miami*



**Williams**  
*Washington*



**Rogers**  
*Michigan St.*



**Clark**  
*Iowa*



**Gross**  
*Utah*



**Andrews**  
*Arkansas*



**Romberg**  
*Miami*



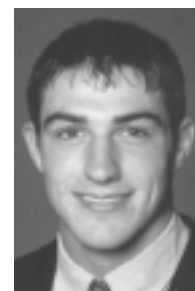
**Nelson**  
*Iowa*



**Dockery**  
*Texas*



**Kaeding**  
*Iowa*



**Abney**  
*Kentucky*



# FWAA ALL-AMERICAN DEFENSE

Position	Player	School	Comment
Defensive lineman	Terrell Suggs	Arizona St.	All-time sacks leader
Defensive lineman	Rien Long	Washington St.	Stepped up big against USC
Defensive lineman	David Pollack	Georgia	Only a sophomore
Defensive lineman	Michael Haynes	Penn St.	Strong against run or pass
Linebacker	E. J. Henderson	Maryland	ACC tackles leader
Linebacker	Matt Wilhelm	Ohio St.	Returned from ankle surgery
Linebacker	Teddy Lehman	Oklahoma	Great pursuit speed
Defensive back	Terence Newman	Kansas St.	Doubles as return specialist
Defensive back	Shane Walton	Notre Dame	3 INTs vs. Maryland
Defensive back	Troy Polamalu	USC	1 of 2 repeaters on defense
Defensive back	Mike Doss	Ohio St.	Teams pass to other side
Punter	Andy Groom	Ohio St.	Placement of punts exquisite



**Henderson**  
*Maryland*



**Polamalu**  
*USC*



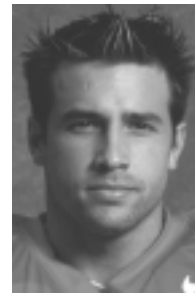
**Suggs**  
*Arizona St.*



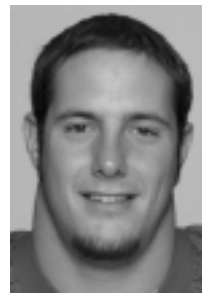
**Long**  
*Washington St.*



**Pollack**  
*Georgia*



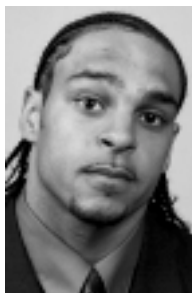
**Wilhelm**  
*Ohio St.*



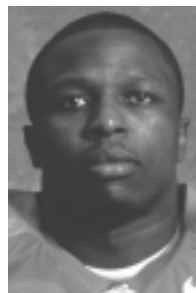
**Lehman**  
*Oklahoma*



**Newman**  
*Kansas St.*



**Walton**  
*Notre Dame*



**Doss**  
*Ohio St.*



**Haynes**  
*Penn St.*



**Groom**  
*Ohio State*

## Outland Trophy: Rien Long, Washington St.

Washington State defensive tackle Rien Long was named the winner of the Outland Trophy during the ESPN College Football Awards Show on Dec. 12.

A panel of writers from the Football Writers Association of America selected the winner after naming three finalists in early December. The other finalists were Miami center Brett Romberg and Utah offensive tackle Jordan Gross.

"The games are a piece of cake compared to this," Long said after accepting the award. "My heart was racing. Coach Walker (Mike, the line coach) has taught me a plethora of moves and the skills I need to know to do my job."

Long, who is the second defensive tackle to win the award during the last three years and first player from Washington State to win the Outland, also will be honored at a banquet hosted by the Omaha Sports Committee and First Data Corp. on Jan. 9.

"I think we have had to get six jerseys for him this season, because other teams have torn off so many with their double and triple teams he is so strong," said Washington State coach Mike Price. "For a tall guy, he gets good leverage. Usually on the defensive line you have shorter guys for leverage. It's very unusual for a defensive tackle to have as many sacks (13). And we are not a blitzing team."

The FWAA has presented the Outland Trophy since 1946 to the best interior linemen in college football.

Long, a 6-6½, 286-pound junior from Anacortes, Wash., ranked third nationally in sacks and fourth in tackles for loss during the 2002 season. His 19.5 tackles for 103 yards in losses this season ranks second on



Rien Long is the second defensive tackle to win the Outland Trophy in the last three years. He is the first Washington State player to win the Outland.

Washington State's all-time list.

Long "challenged" Walker, his line coach, to have an ear pierced if he registered 10 sacks. After Walker pierced one of his ears, Long issued another challenge. If he registered 13 sacks, Walker would get a tattoo. Long is still waiting for Walker to go to the tattoo parlor.

"Maybe he can get a tattoo of this guy," Long quipped, looking at the Outland Trophy.

### PAST OUTLAND WINNERS

#### Year Player, school

1946 George Connor, Notre Dame  
 1947 Joe Steffy, Army  
 1948 Bill Fischer, Notre Dame  
 1949 Ed Bagdon, Michigan State  
 1950 Bob Gain, Kentucky  
 1951 Jim Weatherall, Oklahoma  
 1952 Dick Modzelewski, Maryland  
 1953 J.D. Roberts, Oklahoma  
 1954 Bill Brooks, Arkansas  
 1955 Calvin Jones, Iowa  
 1956 Jim Parker, Ohio State  
 1957 Alex Karras, Iowa  
 1958 Zeke Smith, Auburn  
 1959 Mike McGee, Duke  
 1960 Tom Brown, Minnesota  
 1961 Merlin Olsen, Utah State  
 1962 Bobby Bell, Minnesota  
 1963 Scott Appleton, Texas  
 1964 Steve Delong, Tennessee

#### Year Player, school

1965 Tommy Nobis, Texas  
 1966 Loyd Phillips, Arkansas  
 1967 Ron Yary, USC  
 1968 Bill Stanfill, Georgia  
 1969 Mike Reid, Penn State  
 1970 Jim Stillwagon, Ohio State  
 1971 Larry Jacobson, Nebraska  
 1972 Rich Glover, Nebraska  
 1973 John Hicks, Ohio State  
 1974 Randy White, Maryland  
 1975 Lee Roy Selmon, Oklahoma  
 1976 Ross Browner, Notre Dame  
 1977 Brad Shearer, Texas  
 1978 Greg Roberts, Oklahoma  
 1979 Jim Ritcher, N.C. State  
 1980 Mark May, Pittsburgh  
 1981 Dave Rimington, Nebraska  
 1982 Dave Rimington, Nebraska  
 1983 Dean Steinkuhler, Nebraska

#### Year Player, school

1984 Bruce Smith, Virginia Tech  
 1985 Mike Ruth, Boston College  
 1986 Jason Buck, BYU  
 1987 Chad Hennings, Air Force  
 1988 Tracy Rucker, Auburn  
 1989 Mohammed Elewonibi, BYU  
 1990 Russell Maryland, Miami (Fla.)  
 1991 Steve Emtman, Washington  
 1992 Will Shields, Nebraska  
 1993 Rob Waldrop, Arizona  
 1994 Zach Wiegert, Nebraska  
 1995 Jonathan Ogden, UCLA  
 1996 Orlando Pace, Ohio State  
 1997 Aaron Taylor, Nebraska  
 1998 Kris Farris, UCLA  
 1999 Chris Samuels, Alabama  
 2000 John Henderson, Tennessee  
 2001 Bryant McKinnie, Miami

# Nagurski Trophy: Terrell Suggs, Arizona St.

Arizona State's Terrell Suggs won the Bronko Nagurski Trophy, which is awarded to college football's best defensive player by the Football Writers Association of America and the Charlotte Touchdown Club.

Suggs, a junior end, was named the winner of the FWAA's 10th annual defensive award at a banquet on Dec. 9 at the Adams Mark Hotel in Charlotte, N.C.

The other finalists for the award were Maryland linebacker E.J. Henderson, Kansas State defensive back Terence Newman, Notre Dame defensive back Shane Walton and Georgia end David Pollack.

"Oh, man," Suggs said after receiving the award. "I really didn't have a special program (speech). I didn't expect to win. E. J. Henderson had been an All-American last year. And there was the fastest man in college football here (Newman). This was just kind of unexpected. I have won some team awards, but nothing this big, nothing national."

Suggs, 6-3, 252 pounds, had 22 sacks this season, breaking the NCAA record of 17.5. He also led the nation in tackles for losses with 29.5.

"Suggs is the most dominant player I have seen on film this year," said Oregon coach Mike Bellotti.

Suggs had only one tackle for loss against the Ducks, but he made the most important defensive play of the game. Suggs hit quarterback Jason Fife on Oregon's final offensive play. The hit caused Fife to throw an interception that secured the Arizona State victory.

"Terrell Suggs was unstoppable," said Washington coach Rick Neuheisel. Suggs had 4.5 sacks against the Huskies. That was the most by a Sun Devil since Derrick Rodgers, a former Nagurski finalist, had 4.5 sacks against California in 1996.

Suggs' 29.5 tackles for loss during the 2002 season surpassed the Pacific-10 Conference record of 28, which was held by Stanford's Ron George (1990).

During the 2002 season, Suggs also had one interception and return for 22 yards and forced six fumbles.

Suggs is the first Pac-10 Player to win the FWAA Defensive Player of the Year award since Arizona's Rob Waldrop won the inaugural award in 1993.

"I am at a West Coast school," Suggs said. "I didn't think the people on the East Coast knew who I was."

Suggs has had an illustrious career at Arizona State. He started as a true freshman in 2000 and was one of the best pass rush specialists in the country.

Last season, as a sophomore, he was the leader of the Sun Devil defense and was first-team All-Pac-10. He started all 11 games, had 42 tackles (24 unassisted) and added 18 tackles for loss totaling 79 yards.



Terrell Suggs set an NCAA record with 22 sacks this season. He also led the nation with 29.5 tackles for losses.

A native of Chandler, Ariz., Suggs has a career total of 63.5 tackles for 317 yards in losses, or more than the length of three football fields.

## PAST NAGURSKI WINNERS

Year	Player	School
1993	Rob Waldrop	Arizona
1994	Warren Sapp	Miami (Fla.)
1995	Pat Fitzgerald	Northwestern
1996	Pat Fitzgerald	Northwestern
1997	Charles Woodson	Michigan
1998	Champ Bailey	Georgia
1999	Corey Moore	Virginia Tech
2000	Dan Morgan	Miami
2001	Roy Williams	Oklahoma

# Tostitos Fiesta Bowl Schedule of Media Events

## Thursday, Dec. 26

**4 p.m. — Ohio State arrival press conference**, coach Jim Tressel (Sky Harbor International Airport)

## Friday, Dec. 27

**11 a.m. — Miami arrival press conference**, coach Larry Coker (Sky Harbor International Airport)

**Noon-2 p.m. — Ohio State practice** (Pinnacle High School)

**3-5 p.m. — Miami practice** (Scottsdale Community College),

## Saturday, December 28

**11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.** — Ohio State practice (Pinnacle High),

**1:30-3:30 p.m.** — Miami practice (Scottsdale CC)

## Sunday, December 29

**8:30-9:30 a.m. — Miami press conference** with offensive coordinator Rob Chudzinski and players Vernon Carey, Ken Dorsey, Sherko Haji-Rasouli, Andre Johnson, Willis McGahee and Brett Romberg (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. — Ohio State press conference** with defensive coordinator Mark Dantonio, players Mike Doss, Chris Gamble, Kenny Peterson and Matt Wilhelm (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**Noon-2 p.m. — Ohio State practice** (Pinnacle High).

**3:15-5:15 p.m. — Miami practice** (Scottsdale CC)

## Monday, December 30

**9-9:45 a.m. — Ohio State press conference** with offensive coordinator Jim Bollman, players Maurice Clarrett, Michael Jenkins, Craig Krenzel, Shane Olivea (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**9:45-10:30 a.m. — Miami press conference** with defensive coordinator Randy Shannon and players Jerome McDougle, Maurice Sikes, Jonathan Vilma and Matt Walters (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**Noon-2 p.m. — Ohio State practice** (Pinnacle High)

**2:30-4:30 p.m. — Miami practice** (Scottsdale CC)

## Tuesday, December 31

**9:30-10:30 a.m. — Miami media day**, coach Larry Coker and entire team in jerseys at Sun Devil Stadium

**11 a.m.-noon — Ohio State media day**, coach Jim Tressel

and entire team in jerseys at Sun Devil Stadium.

**Noon — Media lunch**, Sun Devil Stadium press box.

**1:30-3:30 p.m. — Miami practice** (Scottsdale CC)

**2-4 p.m. — Ohio State practice** (Pinnacle High)

## Wednesday, January 1

**9-10 a.m. — Ohio State press conference** with players Mike Doss, Andy Groom, Craig Krenzel, Donnie Nickey, Mike Nugent, Matt Wilhelm (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**10-11 a.m. — Miami press conference** with players Vernon Carey, Ken Dorsey, Willis McGahee, Brett Romberg, Jonathan Vilma and Matt Walter (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**1:30-3:30 p.m. — Miami practice** (Scottsdale CC).

**5:30-7 p.m. — Ohio State practice** (Pinnacle High)

## Thursday, January 2

**8:30-9 a.m. — Miami press conference** with coach Larry Coker (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**9-9:30 a.m. — Ohio State press conference** with coach Jim Tressel (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**1:30-2:30 p.m. — Miami walk-through** (Sun Devil Stadium), closed to media

**4:30-5:30 — Ohio State walk-through** (Sun Devil Stadium), closed to media.

**6:15 p.m. — FWAA board meeting** (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

## Friday, January 3

**9:30-11:30 a.m. — FWAA Awards Breakfast/Meeting** (Phoenix Airport Marriott)

**6 p.m. — Tostitos Fiesta Bowl Football Classic**

## Saturday, January 4

**9 a.m. — Presentation of Grantland Rice Trophy** to coach of championship team (Phoenix Marriott Airport)

**Note:** Ohio State practices are closed to the media with the exception of Friday Dec. 27 practice, when the last 30 minutes of which will be open. Coach Jim Tressel and selected players also will be available for interviews after that practice only.

Miami practices are closed, but Miami coach Larry Coker and selected players will be available after each practice, with the exception of the walk-through on Jan. 2, after which there will be no coach or player availability.

18652 Vista Del Sol  
Dallas, TX 75287

(972) 713-6198

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