



Nov. 21, 2016  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Contact: Steve Richardson  
tiger@fwaa.com  
214-870-6516

## 2016 OUTLAND TROPHY FINALISTS NAMED

**DALLAS (FWAA)** – Three finalists for the **71st Outland Trophy**, which is awarded to the best interior lineman in college football on offense or defense, were named on Monday by the **Football Writers Association of America**: Ohio State center **Pat Elflein**, Washington State offensive guard **Cody O’Connell** and Alabama offensive tackle **Cam Robinson**.

The winner of the 2016 Outland Trophy will be announced Thurs., Dec. 8, on *The Home Depot College Football Awards* on ESPN, the main show beginning at 7 p.m. ET from the National Football Foundation’s College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta.

Elflein, a 6-3, 300-pound senior from Pickerington, Ohio, has started all 11 games for the second-ranked Buckeyes (10-1), who play Michigan on Saturday in a showdown of Big Ten East Division powers. He is the only senior on Ohio State’s offensive line and has 40 career starts. He played guard was named All-Big Ten First Team twice as a sophomore and junior prior to this season, but moved to center because he projects to play the position in the NFL. The Buckeyes rank fifth in the nation in scoring (43.8 ppg), eighth in rushing offense (263.1 ypg) and 21st in total offense (493.1 ypg).

O’Connell, a 6-8, 354-pound junior guard from Wenatchee, Wash., helps trigger Washington State’s high-octane offense that ranks second in the country in passing, led by quarterback Luke Falk. The Cougars (8-3) will host Washington on Friday to determine the Pac-12 North Division champion. Through the first nine games, O’Connell had graded out at 92 percent while not allowing a sack. He has 23 knockdowns through nine games in 364 pass plays. Washington State is 10th in the nation in both scoring (42.5 ppg) and total offense (512.5 ypg).

Robinson, a 6-6, 310-pound junior from Monroe, La., is the top offensive tackle on the No. 1-ranked team in college football that produces 477.6 yards per game. He has started every game at left tackle since he has been on campus (39 straight games). He is second on the team with 19 knockdown blocks through the first nine games. He has been a five-time offensive player of the week by the Alabama coaching staff. Robinson played a great game in the victory at LSU, with no sacks allowed and no penalties and had a similar game vs. Tennessee. He has blocked for 10 100-yard rushers this season. Alabama ranks 14th in the country in scoring (40.3 ppg), 13th in rushing (249.8 ypg) and 27th in total offense (477.6 ypg).

Alabama, Ohio State and Washington State all have had previous Outland Trophy winners. The Buckeyes lead the group with four previous winners: Jim Parker (1956), Jim Stillwagon (1970), John Hicks (1973) and Orlando Pace (1996). Alabama didn’t have a winner until 1999, but now has three previous winners: Chris Samuels (1999), Andre Smith (2008) and Barrett Jones (2011). Washington State’s lone previous winner is Rien Long (2002).

The **Outland Trophy**, which is named after the late John Outland, an All-America lineman at the University of Pennsylvania in the late 1800s, is the third-oldest player award in major-college football behind the Heisman Trophy and Maxwell Award. It has been awarded to the best interior lineman in college football on offense or defense since 1946 when Notre Dame’s George Connor was named the recipient.

For the 20th consecutive year, the presentation of the Outland Trophy will occur in Omaha, on Jan. 11, 2017, at a banquet sponsored by the Greater Omaha Sports Committee. At the same banquet, Oklahoma offensive lineman Greg Roberts will receive an Outland Trophy. Roberts was the 1978 winner of the award before trophies were handed out by the FWAA. His Oklahoma coach, the legendary Barry Switzer, will receive the third annual Tom Osborne Legacy Award during the evening.

The Outland Trophy is a member of the **National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA)**. The NCFAA encompasses the most prestigious awards in college football. The 22 awards boast more 700 years of tradition-selection excellence. Visit [ncaa.org](http://ncaa.org) to learn more about our story.

The **Football Writers Association of America**, a non-profit organization founded in 1941, consists of more than 1,300 men and women who cover college football. The membership includes journalists, broadcasters and publicists, as well as key executives in all the areas that involve the game. The FWAA works to govern areas that include game-day operations, major

awards and its annual All-America team. For more information about the FWAA and its award programs, contact Steve Richardson at [tiger@fwaa.com](mailto:tiger@fwaa.com) or call 214-870-6516.

The **Greater Omaha Sports Committee**, founded in 1977, is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, consisting of more than 900 men and women from the City of Omaha, the State of Nebraska and others. The membership serves to communicate, develop, initiate and promote sports activities in the Greater Omaha sports area. In addition to the Outland Trophy Award Dinner, the Greater Omaha Sports Committee promotes high school, college, and professional sports in the Greater Omaha area and the Midwest.