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2012 Doak Walker Award Candidates Announced

DALLAS, TEXAS - The PwC SMU Athletic Forum announced today the preseason candidates for the 2012 Doak Walker Award. The award is presented annually to the nation's top college running back.

The field of 52 candidates is highlighted by 2011 Doak Walker Award finalist Montee Ball from the University of Wisconsin. Ball, a senior from Wentzville, Missouri, led the nation in rushing yards and scoring last season. Other nominees include 2011 semifinalists Rex Burkhead (Nebraska), Zach Line (SMU) and Joseph Randle (Oklahoma State).

Nominations for the award will be accepted through October. The complete list of candidates, who were nominated by their universities, follows:

Michael Alisa (Jr.), BYU
Montee Ball (Sr.), Wisconsin
Kenjon Barner (Sr.), Oregon
Le′Veon Bell (Jr.), Michigan State
Giovani Bernard (So.), North Carolina
Rex Burkhead (Sr.), Nebraska
Jesse Callier (Jr.), Washington
Benny Cunningham (Sr.), Middle Tennessee
Orleans Darkwa (Jr.), Tulane
Knile Davis (Jr.), Arkansas
Andre Ellington (Sr.), Clemson
Johnathan Franklin (Sr.), UCLA
Ray Graham (Sr.), Pittsburgh
Gee Gee Greene (Sr.), Navy
Jordan Hall (Sr.), Ohio State
D.J. Harper (Sr.), Boise State
John Hubert (Jr.), Kansas State
Michael James (Sr.), Miami
Waymon James (Jr.), TCU
Nathan Jeffery (So.), UTEP
Walter Kazee (Sr.), San Diego State
Eddie Lacy (Jr.), Alabama
Marcus Lattimore (Jr.), South Carolina
Hunter Lee (So.), Louisiana Tech
Zach Line (Sr.), SMU
Raymond Maples (Jr.), Army
Cameron Marshall (Sr.), Arizona State
Onterio McCalebb (Sr.), Auburn
Lyle McCombs (So.), Connecticut
Curtis McNeal (Sr.), USC
Christine Michael (Sr.), Texas A&M
Latavius Murray (Sr.), UCF
Branden Oliver (Jr.), Buffalo
Joseph Randle (Jr.), Oklahoma State
Silas Redd (Jr.), Penn State
Kedrick Rhodes (Jr.), Florida International
Robbie Rouse (Sr.), Fresno State
Jarred Salubi (Sr.), Baylor
Anthon Samuel (So.), Bowling Green
Orwin Smith (Sr.), Georgia Tech
Isi Sofele (Sr.), California
Shawn Southward (Sr.), Troy
Zac Stacy (Sr.), Vanderbilt
Eric Stephens (Sr.), Texas Tech
Stepfan Taylor (Sr.), Stanford
Fitzgerald Toussaint (Jr.), Michigan
Matthew Tucker (Sr.), TCU
James White (Jr.), Iowa State
James White (Jr.), Wisconsin
John White (Sr.), Utah
Kerwynn Williams (Sr.), Utah State
Cierre Wood (Sr.), Notre Dame

The PwC SMU Athletic Forum Board of Directors will name the semifinalists on November 9, and the Doak Walker Award National Selection Committee will cast votes to determine the finalists, who will be announced on November 19. The committee will cast a second vote beginning on November 26 to determine the recipient. The National Selection Committee consists of former NFL All-Pro and college All-America running backs, media members and selected special representatives.

The recipient of the 2012 Doak Walker Award will be announced live on *The Home Depot College Football Awards* on Thursday, December 6, on ESPN. The Doak Walker Award Presentation Banquet will be held in Dallas, Texas, in February 2013.

The award, in its 23nd year, is named for SMU's three-time All-America running back Doak Walker. It is the only major collegiate award that requires all candidates to be in good academic standing and on schedule to graduate within one year of other students of the same classification.

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Honoring the legends of sports for 23 years, the PwC SMU Athletic Forum celebrates outstanding success in athletics. Based in Dallas, the series features major figures from a variety of sports. The PwC SMU Athletic Forum includes four luncheons and the prestigious Doak Walker Award Presentation Banquet.

The Doak Walker Award is a member of the National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA). The NCFAA was founded in 1997 as a coalition of the major collegiate football awards to protect, preserve and enhance the integrity, influence and prestige of the game's predominant awards. The NCFAA encourages professionalism and the highest standards for the administration of its member awards and the selection of their candidates and recipients. For more information, visit the association's official website, www.NCFAA.org.

The members of the NCFAA are unveiling their preseason watch lists over a 12-day period this month. Fifteen of the association's 21 awards select a preseason watch list and the NCFAA has spearheaded a coordinated effort to promote each award's preseason candidates. The Walter Camp Award will release the final NCFAA 2012 preseason watch list on July 20.

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