



Contact: Jeff Lockhart (214) 768-4314
lockhart@smu.edu

For Immediate Release
November 19, 2012

Seniors Montee Ball, Kenjon Barner, Johnathan Franklin
Named Finalists for the 2012 Doak Walker Award

DALLAS, TEXAS – The PwC SMU Athletic Forum today announced **Montee Ball** of Wisconsin, **Kenjon Barner** of Oregon and **Johnathan Franklin** of UCLA as the three finalists for the 2012 Doak Walker Award. The finalists were determined by a vote of the 174-member Doak Walker Award National Selection Committee.

The Committee will cast a second ballot to determine the recipient of the 2012 Doak Walker Award. The recipient will be revealed on ESPN during The Home Depot College Football Awards airing live from the Atlantic Dance Hall at Disney's BoardWalk at the Walt Disney World Resort on Thursday, December 6, at 7:30 p.m. (ET). The award will be presented at the 2012 Doak Walker Award Presentation Banquet in Dallas on Friday, February 15, 2013.

Ball, a senior from Wentzville, Missouri, has rushed for 1,417 yards and 17 touchdowns this season. He ranks seventh nationally in both total rushing yards and rushing yards per game. With 78 career touchdowns, Ball is tied for the all-time NCAA career lead in touchdowns. Ball and the Badgers have two games remaining, including the Big 10 Championship game on December 1. Ball was a finalist for the 2011 Doak Walker Award.

Barner, a senior from Riverside, California, has amassed 1,426 yards and is averaging 6.5 yards per carry in 2012. He ranks sixth nationally in both total rushing yards and rushing yards per game. Barner established the Oregon single game rushing record with a 321 yard and five touchdown performance vs. USC this year.

Franklin, a senior from Los Angeles, California, has rushed for 1,441 yards this season and ranks fifth nationally in both total rushing yards and rushing yards per game. He has averaged 6.3 yards per carry this season. Franklin has become UCLA's all-time leading rusher with two games remaining, including the Pac-12 title game on November 30.

-more-

The three Doak Walker Award finalists will be highlighted on ESPNU during The Home Depot College Football Awards Nomination Special airing Tuesday, November 20, at 6 p.m. (ET). The 30-minute program, hosted by Matt Schick, will include player interviews and analysis from Kevin Carter on the finalists for the Doak Walker Award and other members of the National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA).

In addition to outstanding performance on the field, candidates for the Doak Walker Award must have demonstrated records of leadership and exhibited the characteristics of sportsmanship and fair play associated with Doak Walker.

The award is named after three-time SMU All-America running back and 1948 Heisman Trophy winner Doak Walker. The versatile Walker, who also punted, returned kicks and kicked extra points, led the Mustangs to two Southwest Conference Championships and brought the school into the national spotlight. Walker was drafted by the Detroit Lions and as a rookie led the league in scoring. During his six years with the Lions, he led the team to two NFL championships and was chosen All-Pro four times. Walker is a member of both the College and Pro Football Halls of Fame.

###

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.

-doakwalkeraward.com-