

2018 OUTLAND TROPHY SEMIFINALISTS UNVEILED

OMAHA (FWAA) – Eight semifinalists for the **2018 Outland Trophy** – including two pairs of teammates – were announced Wednesday by the **Greater Omaha Sports Committee** and the **Football Writers Association of America**. The eight semifinalists are players from six schools at five different positions representing five different conferences.

The field for the 2018 Outland Trophy is as follows, listed in alphabetical order: North Carolina State center **Garrett Bradbury**, Wisconsin guard **Michael Deiter**, Clemson offensive tackle **Mitch Hyatt**, Houston defensive tackle **Ed Oliver**, Oklahoma guard **Ben Powers**, Clemson defensive tackle **Christian Wilkins**, Alabama offensive tackle **Jonah Williams** and Alabama nose guard **Quinnen Williams**.



The eight semifinalists will be pared to three finalists next week and announced on Nov. 20. The recipient of the 73rd Outland Trophy will be announced during ESPN's *The Home Depot College Football Awards* on Dec. 6, live from the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta. The official presentation to the winner will be made at the Outland Trophy Awards Dinner presented by Werner Enterprises and produced by the Greater Omaha Sports Committee on Jan. 9, 2019.

Also appearing at the dinner for the 21st straight year will be the winners of Nebraska's football senior awards **Tom Novak Trophy**, given annually to the senior who “best exemplifies courage and determination despite all odds.” **Guy Chamberlin Trophy**, which goes to the senior “who has shown by his play on and off-field contributions to the betterment of the Nebraska football squad in the tradition of Guy Chamberlin” and **Cletus Fischer Native Son Award**, given annually by the coaches to the player who “best exemplifies good work ethic, competitiveness, leadership, pride and love of Nebraska”.

The **5th Annual Tom Osborne Legacy Award** will be presented to **Frank Solich**, former Head Football Coach from Nebraska University at the Outland Trophy Award Dinner. The Tom Osborne Legacy Award is awarded for making extraordinary contributions to the Outland Trophy and to the interior line play in college football; for exhibiting the characteristics of integrity, sportsmanship and fair play associated with Tom Osborne; for demonstrating a record of leadership and good citizenship in the community that’s consistent with Rotary International’s primary motto, “Service Above Self”. The inaugural award was presented to Milt Tenopir, Coach from University of Nebraska, Jim Ridlon Sr from the University of Syracuse in 2015, to legendary coach from Oklahoma Barry Switzer in 2016 and last year to Bobby Bowden, Florida State Hall of Fame Coach.

Here is a closer look at each of the semifinalists:

Garrett Bradbury, C, North Carolina State (6-3, 300, Gr., Charlotte, N.C.): A three-year starter on the line, the team co-captain has played all but four snaps for the Wolfpack this season. In 679 snaps he has not allowed a sack and has only allowed two pressures on 348 pass attempts. His protection has helped place Ryan Finley on the cusp to become N.C. State's only quarterback to pass for 3,000-plus yards in three different seasons. Has led the blocking for an offense averaging 31.4 points and 453.0 yards per game. Earned his degree last year in business supply operations management.

Michael Deiter, G, Wisconsin (6-6, 321, Sr., Curtice, Ohio): A mainstay on the Badgers' offensive front – he has started all 51 games of his career – that is currently paving the way for the nation's leading rusher and the sixth-best ground attack. Jonathan Taylor (1,548 yards, 154.8 per game) is the fourth Wisconsin back to record back-to-back 1,500-yard rushing seasons and is 25 yards ahead by average to the nation's second-leading. Deiter

(DEE-ter) should make his school-record 52nd career start Saturday at Purdue – 21 have come at left guard, 16 at center and 14 at left tackle.

Mitch Hyatt, OT, Clemson (6-5, 310, Jr., Suwanee, Ga.): The Tigers' left tackle is helping produce offensive numbers in record territory. The unbeaten Tigers are one of five schools with three active 1,000-yard career rushers on its current roster (Hyatt has been up front for all three), and Clemson is ninth in the nation in total offense at 526.6 yards per game, which is currently 10th in school history. Hyatt, a 2017 Second Team FWA All-American and the Outland Trophy Offensive Player of the Month for October, already owns Clemson's career record for snaps from scrimmage (3,420) and will break another record with a 53rd career start Saturday against Duke.

Ed Oliver, DT, Houston (6-3, 290, Jr., Houston, Texas): The 2017 Outland Trophy winner was the first sophomore to ever win the Outland Trophy and earned FWA First-Team All-America honors last year. He was an FWA Freshman All-America in 2016 as well. Despite missing three games and constant double and triple teams, Oliver leads all defensive linemen nationally with an average of 7.29 tackles per game. Oliver's 1.93 tackles for loss per game is third nationally, and he has a career average of 1.64 tackles for loss per game. His final home game is Thursday against Tulane, as he has already declared to enter the 2019 NFL Draft.

Ben Powers, G, Oklahoma (6-4, 314, Sr., Wichita, Kan.): The Sooners' left guard is the leader of a line that is currently powering the nation's top offense in yards per game (577.1) and yards per play (8.91). The 8.91 yards per play is on an NCAA-record pace above Hawaii's 8.6 from 2006. Oklahoma is the nation's only team this year with at least 30 rushing touchdowns (31) and at least 30 passing TDs (33), and the Sooners have rushed for at least 300 yards and passed for at least 300 a school-record four times already this year, and in three straight games.

Christian Wilkins, DT, Clemson (6-4, 300, Gr., Springfield, Mass.): A standout player for the unbeaten Tigers, even as part of a defensive line featuring four returning All-Americans. Wilkins was an FWA First-Team All-America selection in 2016. He has 10.5 tackles for loss, second on the team, to go with three sacks and 40 tackles (29 solo) for the season. Clemson was No. 1 nationally in tackles for loss in the first two of Wilkins' three prior seasons in the middle and was No. 6 last year. His 13.5 stops behind the line have resulted in 67 yards of losses. Wilkins will play in his 54th career game Saturday against Duke. Wilkins graduated in 2017 with a degree in communications in only two-and-a-half years.

Jonah Williams, OT, Alabama (6-5, 301, Jr., Folsom, Calif.): The left tackle for the unbeaten Crimson Tide continues to pace the nation's No. 5 but arguably most-feared offense. Williams was the Outland Trophy Offensive Player of the Month for September after grading out above 90 percent for the month. The junior has started all 39 games in his career and had perhaps his best game against LSU when Alabama averaged 7.6 yards per rush and gained 576 yards against a then-Top-10 defense and allowed only one sack on a season-high 42 pass attempts. Alabama only yields 0.67 sacks per game, fourth nationally.

Quinnen Williams, NG, Alabama (6-4, 295, So., Birmingham, Ala.): The upstart sophomore leads unbeaten Alabama with 14.0 tackles for loss for minus-58 yards and is tied for 11th in the SEC with 5.0 sacks. He too posted a career game against LSU, tallying career highs in tackles (10) and sacks (2.5) and tying a career high in tackles for loss (3.5). Williams clogs the middle and allows those around him to create havoc – Alabama has had at least 10 tackles for loss in five of 10 games and in three straight. The Crimson Tide's 36 sacks (3.60 per game) are both tied for No. 3 nationally.

For additional information on each of the Semifinalists visit web site:
<https://showofficeonline.com/OTADHOME/outland-award-winner/>

The **Outland Trophy** is the third-oldest major college football award. Created in 1946 when Dr. John Outland

presented the FWAA with a financial contribution to initiate the award, the Outland Trophy has been given to the best interior lineman in college football ever since. Dr. Outland, an All-American at the University of Pennsylvania in the late 1890s, eventually took up practice in Kansas City, Mo. An avid outdoorsman, Dr. Outland believed linemen did not get the credit they deserved and wanted an award to recognize them.

The 2018 Outland Trophy, presented by the **National Foundation for Infectious Diseases** (NFID), is awarded annually to the nation's best college interior lineman on offense or defense. NFID is presenting the trophy to help increase awareness about the importance of annual flu prevention. Getting vaccinated each year is your best line of defense against the flu.

The Outland Trophy is a member of the **National College Football Awards Association** (NCFAA), which encompasses the most prestigious awards in college football. Founded in 1997, the NCFAA and its 24 awards now boast over 800 recipients, dating to 1935. Visit ncfaa.org to learn more about our story.

The Greater Omaha Sports Committee, founded in 1977, is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, consisting of more than 1000 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. See www.showofficeonline.com for more info.

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For Additional Information, Contact:

Bob Mancuso Jr ♦ Chairman - Greater Omaha Sports Committee
7015 Spring Street, Omaha, NE 68106-3518
(402) 346-8003 ♦ Fax (402) 346-5412 ♦ bmancuso@showofficeonline.com
www.showofficeonline.com

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