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Breida Named to Lombardi Watch List

Senior running back meets new criteria for award



Frank Fortune

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HOUSTON - The Rotary Lombardi Award committee announced a preliminary watch list of college football players who have the potential to win the honorable Rotary Lombardi Award for the 2016/2017 football season. That list includes Georgia Southern running back [Matt Breida](#).

Breida has already been named a candidate for the Maxwell Trophy and the Doak Walker Award. Breida led both the nation and Sun Belt in rushing yards per carry at 7.9 yards last year and led the nation in 2013 as well. A First-Team All-Sun Belt Conference

selection for the second year in a row, he led the Eagles with 1,608 rushing yards and 17 touchdowns. The Brooksville, Florida, native had seven 100-yard rushing games in 2016.

The starting list of 158 candidates are players who demonstrate outstanding performance and skill in offensive or defensive positions and best exemplify the discipline, virtue and wisdom that defined Vincent Lombardi's exceptional brand of leadership. The players gained a position on the preliminary watch list by earning All-American honors, being named to their respective all-conference teams, or by receiving 2016 pre-season honors.

The Rotary Lombardi Award began in 1970 by the Rotary Club of Houston to honor NFL coach Vince Lombardi and to recognize outstanding college football lineman. The award began as recognition to only interior line positions that Vince Lombardi played while an undergraduate at Fordham University (offensive and defensive guard), and later expanded to include linebackers and tight ends, with the addition of including non-performance values: leadership, courage, desire, respect for authority, and discipline.

The 47th Annual Rotary Lombardi Award continues the evolvement of the Lombardi legacy by now expanding the eligibility of the award to all player positions that are outstanding performers and exhibit great leadership attributes. Following the preliminary watch list, a nomination period will open to the internal selection committee to add additional players who meet the skill and leadership standards set forth for the Rotary Lombardi Award.

"We're honored to be a part of the year in which the Rotary Lombardi Award reaches new heights by expanding the positions in which players are eligible for the award," said co-chair Billy Bray. "We're aiming to honor the award recipient in a big way as well as surpass previous funds raised at this event to continue the fight against cancer."

As stipulated by Vince Lombardi's widow, Marie, when the award began, net proceeds from the award activities are contributed to cancer research and children who cannot afford treatment to fight the disease that claimed the life of Vince Lombardi. The Rotary Lombardi Award continues to be hosted by the Rotary Club of Houston and benefits the American Cancer Society, MD Anderson Cancer Center and the Texas Children's Hospital.

The award ceremony date will be announced later in the football season along with updated lists of award candidates. Visit www.rotarylombardiaward.org for more information and continued updates.

The Georgia Southern Eagles open their 2016 season on Sept. 3, hosting Savannah State at Paulson Stadium.

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