



## MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT

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### **Montee Ball, LaMichael James, Trent Richardson Named Finalists for the 2011 Doak Walker Award**

DALLAS, TEXAS – The PwC SMU Athletic Forum today announced **Montee Ball** of Wisconsin, **LaMichael James** of Oregon and **Trent Richardson** of Alabama as the three finalists for the 2011 Doak Walker Award. The three finalists were determined by a vote of the 175-member Doak Walker Award National Selection Committee.

The Committee will cast a second vote to determine the recipient of the 2011 Doak Walker Award. The recipient will be announced live on *The Home Depot College Football Awards* at 9:00 p.m. (EST) on Thursday, December 8 on ESPN. The award will be presented at the 2011 Doak Walker Award Presentation Banquet in Dallas on Friday, February 17, 2012.

Ball, a junior from Wentzville, Missouri, ranks second nationally with 1,466 rushing yards and is averaging 6.6 yards per carry. He leads the nation in scoring and has scored at least two touchdowns in every game this season. With 30 touchdowns in 2011, Ball has eclipsed the Big 10 single-season touchdown record with one regular season game remaining.

James, a junior from Texarkana, Texas, has rushed for 1,285 yards in 2011 despite missing two games due to injury. He leads the nation averaging 143 rushing yards per game. James was the 2010 Doak Walker Award recipient and looks to become the third two-time Doak Walker Award winner (Ricky Williams '97, '98; Darren McFadden '06, '07). James is now the Ducks' career rushing leader.

Richardson, a junior from Pensacola, Florida, has rushed for 1,380 yards this season. He leads the SEC and ranks fourth nationally in both total rushing yards and scoring. Richardson has established a new Alabama single-season record with 20 rushing touchdowns.

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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.

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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, [ncfaa.org](http://ncfaa.org).*

*The presentation of the Doak Walker Award will be featured on The Home Depot College Football Awards live on Thursday, Dec. 8, at 9 p.m. ET on ESPN. The show, hosted by ESPN's Chris Fowler, Lee Corso, Kirk Herbstreit and Desmond Howard will feature the live presentation of nine player awards, along with the recipients of Disney's Spirit Award; The Home Depot Coach of the Year Award; the NCFAA (National College Football Awards Association) Contributions to College Football Award; and student-athletes selected to the Walter Camp All-America Team. Fans can visit the show's dedicated Web site at [www.espncollegefootballawards.com](http://www.espncollegefootballawards.com) to find the latest college football awards news, including show details, previous winners, fan voting, a photo gallery and video highlights.*

**-[smu.edu/doakwalker](http://smu.edu/doakwalker)-**