

12 Rotary Lombardi Award Semifinalists Announced

One returning finalist and three returning semifinalists highlight the list of 12 semifinalists for the 39th Rotary Lombardi Award, presented by Wachovia. The semifinalists were announced today at a kickoff event at SRO Sports Bar & Café. This year's award dinner will be held on December 10 at the Hilton Americas Hotel in Downtown Houston.

Linebacker James Laurinaitis of Ohio State returns to the semifinalist list after being chosen as one of the final four for the 38th Rotary Lombardi Award, which went to LSU's Glenn Dorsey. Also returning from last year's semifinalist list are California's Alex Mack, OU's Duke Robinson and USF's George Selvie.

Four offensive players and eight defensive players were named. The Big 12 Conference leads the pack with four players, followed by the SEC and Pac 10 with three each; the Big 10 and Big East have one each. The 12 semifinalists are:

Brian Cushing, Linebacker, University of Southern California
Auston English, Defensive End, University of Oklahoma
James Laurinaitis, Linebacker, The Ohio State University
Alex Mack, Offensive Lineman, University of California
Rey Maualuga, Linebacker, University of Southern California
Michael Oher, Offensive Tackle, University of Mississippi
Brian Orakpo, Defensive End, The University of Texas
Duke Robinson, Offensive Lineman, University of Oklahoma
George Selvie, Defensive End, University of South Florida
Andre Smith, Offensive Lineman, University of Alabama
Brandon Spikes, Linebacker, University of Florida
Sean Weatherspoon, Linebacker, University of Missouri

Founded in the weeks following the 1970 death from cancer of legendary football coach Vince Lombardi, the Rotary Lombardi Award has consistently delivered upon the mission set forth by Marie Lombardi when she granted the use of her late husband's name. Her only stipulation was that all net proceeds from the event be donated to the American Cancer Society. Millions of dollars have been raised since that time.