

Four Buckeyes Named To Lombardi Award Watch List



Ohio State continued to earn some national preseason recognition on Thursday when four Buckeyes — offensive lineman Donovan Jackson, defensive ends Jack Sawyer and JT Tuimoloau and defensive lineman Tyleik Williams — were named to the preseason watch list for the Lombardi Award, awarded annually to college football’s most outstanding college football lineman who “displays exceptional performance and ability and embodies that character and discipline that Vince Lombardi championed throughout his life.”

Ohio State’s four representatives on the watch list — which features 90 players — are tied for the fourth-most from one team with Oklahoma State and Alabama.

Tuimoloau and Williams each find themselves on their third preseason watch list. The Buckeye defenders are both recognized for the Bronko Nagurski Trophy, awarded to the nation’s top defensive player, while Tuimoloau is named to the watch list for the Lott Impact Trophy, given to the player who fits the acronym IMPACT: Integrity, Maturity, Performance, Academics, Community, and Tenacity, and Williams is honored by the Outland Trophy for the nation’s top interior lineman.

Tuimoloau and Williams are projected to be two of Ohio State’s top defenders this season on a loaded Buckeyes’ squad, as they are both coming off All-Big Ten campaigns and would have likely been early NFL Draft selections if they opted to declare.

Sawyer, another member of Larry Johnson’s unit who received a lot of draft buzz, is featured on his second watch list, with the other being the Chuck Bednarik Award, which honors the nation’s top defensive player as voted on by the Maxwell Football Club.

Sawyer is in line to be one of the Big Ten’s best pass rushers this season after breaking through towards the end of the 2023 campaign, picking up 28 tackles (eight for loss), and 5.5 of his 6.5 total sacks in his final six games.

Jackson is named to his second watch list of the preseason, as he is also recognized by the Outland Trophy. A two-time first-team All-Big Ten selection, he is set to start as Ohio State’s left guard for the third straight season, making him the longest tenured lineman on Justin Frye’s unit.

The four Buckeyes are joined on the Lombardi Watch list alongside some other notable names in college football, including Penn State's Abdul Carter, Michigan's Mason Graham and Georgia's Tate Rutledge.