



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OLD DOMINION'S WATSON IS DOAK WALKER NATIONAL RUNNING BACK OF THE WEEK

Junior sets school single-game mark in 49-21 win at Coastal Carolina

DALLAS (SMU) – Old Dominion running back **Blake Watson** ran for a school-record 259 yards and three touchdowns on just 19 carries in a 49-21 win at Coastal Carolina to earn the **Doak Walker National Running Back of the Week** honor for games of the weekend of Oct. 15.

The Monarchs, now atop the Sun Belt East Division standings, scored first for the first time in a game this season on Watson's 25-yard run in the first quarter. Watson's third score, a 67-yard run, put him over 100 yards for the first time this season and the seventh time in his career.

The 5-9, 195-pound junior from Queens, N.Y., led an offense that racked up 525 total yards with a 35-point second half to end Coastal Carolina's nine-game winning streak. ODU's 324 rushing yards were the most against an FBS opponent in program history as Watson broke Thomas DeMarco's school single-game record of 224 yards set in 2009 vs. N.C. Central.

"A record like that is about all of the people around me," Watson said. "I can't break any records without the offensive line blocking for me, without the receivers out there blocking for me. It's a blessing, but I didn't do this by myself."

The Monarchs host Georgia Southern for Homecoming on Saturday at 3:30 p.m. ET on ESPN-Plus.

Other candidates for the honor in Week 7 included:

- **Chase Brown, Illinois:** In the Illini's 26-14 win over Minnesota, Brown ran for 180 yards to maintain his spot as the national rushing leader becoming the season's first 1,000-yard rusher (1,059 yards). Brown has now rushed for 100 yards in eight consecutive games, extending his program record. He also caught a 40-yard pass for Illinois' first touchdown as the Illini won for a sixth straight time.
- **Blake Corum and Donovan Edwards, Michigan:** The duo combined for 339 rushing yards in a 41-17 blasting of Penn State. Corum ran for 166 yards on 24 carries and Edwards added 173 yards on just 16 totes. Each ran for a pair of scores as the Wolverines remained unbeaten (7-0) in decisive fashion.
- **Carson Steele, Ball State:** The sophomore posted a career game in a 25-21 comeback win over UConn, gaining 179 yards on 32 carries and scoring three touchdowns. He rushed 13 times for 102 yards in the fourth quarter alone and scored twice to conclude Ball State's rally from a 21-10 deficit.

The **Doak Walker Award presented by the PwC SMU Athletic Forum** has been awarded to the nation's top running back since 1990. For the first time, the award is recognizing a national running back of the week this season. A select 20-person committee from the award's full voting body of media and past winners chooses the weekly recipient. On July 20, a preseason candidates list was released and semifinalists for the award will be named on Nov. 22. A week later, the three finalists will be announced.

The 2022 Doak Walker Award winner will be unveiled live on *The Home Depot College Football Awards*, televised by ESPN on Dec. 8. The annual banquet, where the winner and the recipient of the 2022 PwC Doak Walker Legends Award will be honored, will take place in February on the SMU campus.

The Doak Walker Award is a member of the **National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA)**, which encompasses college football's most prestigious awards. The NCFAA's 25 awards have honored more than 800 recipients since 1935. Visit NCFAA.org for more information.

For more information on the Doak Walker Award, contact Jeff Lockhart (lockhart@smu.edu) at the PwC SMU Athletic Forum, visit doakwalkeraward.com and follow on Twitter at [@DoakWalkerAward](https://twitter.com/DoakWalkerAward).



2022 DOAK WALKER NATIONAL RUNNING BACKS OF THE WEEK

- Week 1 (Sept. 3)Chase Brown, Illinois
- Week 2 (Sept. 10)..... Khalan Laborn, Marshall
- Week 3 (Sept. 17) Samson Evans, Eastern Michigan
- Week 4 (Sept. 24)..... Blake Corum, Michigan
- Week 5 (Oct. 1) Jahmyr Gibbs, Alabama
- Week 6 (Oct. 8) Israel Abanikanda, Pitt
- Week 7 (Oct. 15) Blake Watson, Old Dominion
- Week 8 (Oct. 22)
- Week 9 (Oct. 29)
- Week 10 (Nov. 5)
- Week 11 (Nov 12)
- Week 12 (Nov. 19)

2022 DOAK WALKER AWARD PRESEASON CANDIDATES LIST

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Devon Achane, Texas A&M | Deion Hankins, UTEP | Bijan Robinson, Texas |
| Braelon Allen, Wisconsin | TreVeyon Henderson, Ohio State | Raheim Sanders, Arkansas |
| Rasheen Ali, Marshall | George Holani, Boise State | Will Shipley, Clemson |
| Ronald Awaft, UTEP | Evan Hull, Northwestern | Shaun Shivers, Indiana |
| Tank Bigsby, Auburn | Mohamed Ibrahim, Minnesota | Jabari Small, Tennessee |
| Isiah Bowser, UCF | Dillon Johnson, Mississippi State | Chris Smith, Louisiana |
| British Brooks, North Carolina | Roschon Johnson, Texas | Dontae Smith, Georgia Tech |
| Jarek Broussard, Michigan State | Austin Jones, USC | E.J. Smith, Stanford |
| Antario Brown, NIU | Johnnie Lang Jr., Arkansas State | Tyjae Spears, Tulane |
| Chase Brown, Illinois | Keyvone Lee, Penn State | Titus Swen, Wyoming |
| Jermaine Brown, UAB | Joquavious Marks, Mississippi State | Tavion Thomas, Utah |
| Nate Carter, UConn | DeWayne McBride, UAB | Sean Tucker, Syracuse |
| Zach Charbonnet, UCLA | Chez Mellusi, Wisconsin | Calvin Tyler Jr., Utah State |
| Blake Corum, Michigan | Kendre Miller, TCU | Sean Tyler, Western Michigan |
| Travis Dye, USC | Jordan Mims, Fresno State | Chris Tyree, Notre Dame |
| Justice Ellison, Wake Forest | Keaton Mitchell, East Carolina | Xazavian Valladay, Arizona State |
| Samson Evans, Eastern Michigan | Damien Moore, Cal | Deuce Vaughn, Kansas State |
| Deshaun Fenwick, Oregon State | Devin Neal, Kansas | Kimani Vidal, Troy |
| Alex Fontenot, Colorado | Lew Nichols III, Central Michigan | Blake Watson, Old Dominion |
| Pat Garwo, Boston College | Nate Noel, App State | Treshaun Ward, Florida State |
| Frank Gore Jr., Southern Miss | Nathaniel Peat, Missouri | Harrison Waylee, NIU |
| Eric Gray, Oklahoma | Camerun Peoples, App State | Jalen White, Georgia Southern |
| Gerald Green, Georgia Southern | Dominic Richardson, Oklahoma State | Jamyest Williams, Georgia State |
| Tucker Gregg, Georgia State | Johnny Richardson, UCF | Nay'Quan Wright, Florida |
| Hassan Hall, Georgia Tech | | |