

Paris Johnson Jr. Named Semifinalist For Lombardi Award



Ohio State offensive tackle Paris Johnson Jr. has been named a semifinalist for the Rotary Lombardi Award, given annually to the top lineman in college football.

Johnson has been an anchor for Ohio State's offensive line that has allowed just seven sacks in eight games. According to Pro Football Focus, Johnson has allowed just eight pressures on quarterback C.J. Stroud and has not given up a sack.

He made the transition this season from right guard to left tackle after some shuffling on Ohio State's offensive line, but the change has appeared flawless, with Johnson looking like a natural covering Stroud's blind side.

"I think making the transition to tackle, (Johnson)'s done a good job," Ohio State head coach Ryan Day said earlier this season. "He's got some bigger challenges coming. But he's made some progress for sure...for a first-time starting tackle, there's been some good play."

The award can be won by an offensive or defensive player that lines up no more than 10 yards to the left or right of the ball - including tight ends - as well as linebackers that traditionally line up no further than 5 yards deep from the line of scrimmage.

Johnson was named one of 12 semifinalists along with defensive end Felix Anudike-Uzomah (Kansas), defensive tackles Jalen Carter (Georgia) and Tuli Tuipulotu (USC), linebackers Will Anderson Jr. (Alabama) and Jack Campbell (Iowa), offensive linemen O'Cyrus Torrence (Florida), Ole Oluwatimi (Michigan), John Michael Schmitz (Minnesota), Peter Skoronski (Northwestern) and Darnell Wright (Tennessee), and tight end Brock Bowers (Georgia).

Ohio State has had three previous Lombardi Award winners. Offensive lineman Jim Stillwagon won the inaugural award in 1970, with offensive lineman John Hicks (1973), linebacker Chris Spielman (1987), offensive lineman Orlando Pace (1995, 1996) and linebacker A.J. Hawk (2005) also taking home the honor.

Pace remains the only player to win the award twice, let alone in back-to-back seasons. Ohio State's six honorees lead all schools, with Nebraska and Notre Dame each boasting five recipients.

The Lombardi Award will announce the four finalists on Nov. 17, with the winner announced on Dec. 7.