

NEWS

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Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award Announces 2021 Preseason Watch List

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. – Headlined by three former finalists, a previous winner, and an unprecedented 20 former semifinalists, it's a highly competitive year on the thirty-player Watch List for the 2021 Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award, as announced by the Palm Beach County Sports Commission.

Last year's Groza winner, Jose Borregales, is now a Tampa Bay Buccaneer, but his fellow finalists BYU junior Jake Oldroyd and Alabama junior Will Reichard are back to vie for the award. Also returning is SMU senior Blake Mazza, who was a finalist in 2019 while at Washington State, as well as Syracuse senior and 2018 Groza winner Andre Szmyt, who could become just the second player to ever win the award multiple times, joining Sebastian Janikowski who won in 1998 and 1999.

With schools playing such a varied number of games last season, this year's Watch List leans heavily on accuracy. In fact all 16 kickers returning to FBS who attempted 10 field goals and connected at 85% or better are represented on the list: Reichard (14, 100%), Oldroyd (13, 100%), Oklahoma State junior Alex Hale (13, 92.9%), Wyoming sophomore John Hoyland (13, 92.9%), Western Kentucky junior Brayden Narveson (13, 92.9%), UAB sophomore Matt Quinn (11, 91.7%), Auburn senior Anders Carlson (20, 90.9%), Indiana junior Charles Campbell (10, 90.9%), Nebraska super senior Connor Culp (13, 86.7%), Duke sophomore Charlie Ham (13, 86.7%), Louisville junior James Turner (13, 86.7%), LSU junior Cade York (18, 85.7%), Louisiana Tech sophomore Jacob Barnes (12, 85.7%), Kentucky super senior Mark Ruffolo (12, 85.7%), UTSA super senior Hunter Duplessis (17, 85%), and Missouri sophomore Harrison Mevis (17, 85%).

Even though last year's season was shortened, more and more field goals are getting kicked from long distance. All six returning kickers who made at least 3 field goals from 50 yards or further were voted onto the Watch List: York (6), Oklahoma junior Gabe Brkic (4), Campbell (3), Mevis (3), Oldroyd (3), and Georgia junior Jack Podlesny (3).

While the Watch List highlights 30 of the best returning kickers in the country, the Groza Committee will be watching all FBS kickers throughout the season, and releasing a weekly "Stars of the Week" feature on www.lougrozaaward.com. All FBS kickers remain eligible to be selected as semifinalists.

Accomplishments are tabulated throughout the season and the Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award will announce its 20 semifinalists on Thursday, November 4th. From this list, a panel of more than 100 FBS head coaches, SIDs, media members, former Groza finalists, and current NFL kickers selects the top three finalists for the award, announced on Tuesday, November 23rd. That same group then selects the

national winner, who will be announced on Thursday, December 9th during the Home Depot College Football Awards on ESPN.

The 30th Annual Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award, presented by the Orange Bowl Committee, recognizes the three finalists during a celebration in Palm Beach County, culminating with a gala awards banquet at West Palm Beach's Kravis Center for the Performing Arts on December 6th.

The Award is named for National Football League Hall of Fame kicker Lou "The Toe" Groza, who played 21 seasons with the Cleveland Browns. Groza won four NFL championships with Cleveland and was named NFL Player of the Year in 1954. Although an All-Pro offensive lineman as well, Groza ushered in the notion that there should be a place on an NFL roster for a kicker.

For more information on the Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award and to see the "Stars of the Week" throughout the season, please go to www.lougrozaaward.com. For even more updates on the best kicking performances throughout the season, follow [@LouGrozaAward](https://twitter.com/LouGrozaAward) on Twitter.

National College Football Awards Association

The Lou Groza Collegiate Place-Kicker Award is a member of the National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA), which encompasses the most prestigious awards in college football. Founded in 1997, the NCFAA and its 25 awards now boast over 800 recipients, dating to 1935. Visit NCFAA.org and [@NCFAA](https://twitter.com/NCFAA) on Twitter to learn more about the association.

The members of the NCFAA are unveiling preseason watch lists over a 10-day period this month. Fourteen of the association's 25 awards will present their preseason watch list during this time as the NCFAA has spearheaded a coordinated effort to promote each award's preseason candidates.

Following is the complete 2021 preseason watch list calendar:

Mon., July 19: Bednarik Award / Maxwell Award
Tues., July 20: Davey O'Brien Award
Wed., July 21: Doak Walker Award
Thurs., July 22: Biletnikoff Award
Fri., July 23: John Mackey Award / Rimington Trophy
Mon., July 26: Butkus Award / Paycom Jim Thorpe Award
Tues., July 27: Bronko Nagurski Trophy / Outland Trophy
Wed., July 28: Lou Groza Award / Ray Guy Award
Thurs., July 29: Paul Hornung Award / Wuerffel Trophy
Fri., July 30: Walter Camp Award

About the Palm Beach County Sports Commission

The Palm Beach County Sports Commission is a private, not-for-profit organization contracted by Palm Beach County to promote and market the County as a sports and sports tourism destination. The Commission brings sporting events and activities to the County, enhances economic impact, stimulates bed tax revenues (primarily in the off-season), and maximizes utilization of County facilities. The Commission offers a full range of event service support, corporate partnerships, sponsorships, and a local membership program that support its goals. Local, regional, national, and international marketing efforts are ongoing by the Commission with sports organizations and event owners. The Commission also produces sports-related programs for the residents of Palm Beach County including the annual Lou Groza Award program, the Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame, the Kids Fitness Festival of the Palm Beaches, and the annual Holiday Basketball Classic of the Palm Beaches. For more information on the Palm Beach County Sports Commission, go to www.palmbeachsports.com.

Jacob Barnes – Louisiana Tech

Class: Sophomore - Hometown: Baton Rouge, Louisiana

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
12	14	85.7	0-0	5-5	4-4	2-4	1-1	51	33	33	69

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Barnes started his collegiate kicking career with eight straight makes, including a 51 yarder in his second game and a 4-for-4 performance on the road at UTSA. Although he suffered his first miss against UAB, he was able to shake off the mistake and hit the game-winning 35-yard FG in double overtime for a 37-34 victory.

Massimo Biscardi – Coastal Carolina

Class: Senior - Hometown: Downingtown, Pennsylvania

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
11	13	84.6	0-0	5-5	2-2	3-5	1-1	51	48	52	81

A Groza semifinalist in 2018, Biscardi needs just 4 field goals to move to the top of Coastal Carolina's career record book. One of those makes was crucial to getting the Chanticleers' perfect regular season going, as he hit from 40 yards with just seconds left to secure a 30-27 win on the road against a ranked Louisiana team that finished 10-1.

Gabe Brkic – Oklahoma

Class: Junior - Hometown: Chardon, Ohio

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
20	26	76.9	2-2	5-5	5-7	4-6	4-6	54	49	49	109

A Groza semifinalist in both 2019 and 2020, Brkic followed up his perfect (17-17 FG, 52-52 XP) freshman season with another stellar campaign. His 20 field goals tie for the most by a kicker who returns this year, and made him just the 4th Sooner to ever reach that mark in a season. He kicked multiple FGs in 8 of 10 games, including the final 7 of the year.

Charles Campbell – Indiana

Class: Junior - Hometown: Jackson, Tennessee

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
10	11	90.9	0-0	2-2	3-3	2-3	3-3	53	25	25	55

The list of returning kickers who made at least 90% of their field goals while connecting on 3 kicks from 50+ yards: Groza finalist Jake Oldroyd and Charles Campbell. That's it. Two of those long-distance kicks, including his career-long from 53, came in the Outback Bowl, making him just the second Hoosier in program history with two 50+ FGs in the same game.

Anders Carlson – Auburn

Class: Senior - Hometown: Colorado Springs, Colorado

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
20	22	90.9	0-0	8-8	5-6	5-5	2-3	50	24	25	84

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Carlson was one of only two FBS kickers last year to attempt at least 20 field goals with 90% accuracy, along with Miami's Jose Borregales who won the award. Perhaps even more impressive is that he didn't get an attempt in 3 games, making it up with multiple FGs in each of Auburn's other 8 contests, including four 3-FG games.

Jace Christmann – Florida

Class: Super Senior – Hometown: Houston, Texas

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
8	10	80	0-0	2-2	2-3	3-4	1-1	51	39	40	63

[stats from 2019 at Mississippi State]

After a transfer from Mississippi State, Christmann will try to fill the shoes of two-time Groza semifinalist Evan McPherson, the only kicker taken in the 2021 NFL Draft. He brings a resume that's topped by his 80% career accuracy, tied for 7th among active FBS kickers with more than two seasons.

Connor Culp – Nebraska

Class: Super Senior - Hometown: Phoenix, Arizona

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	15	86.7	0-0	4-4	8-10	1-1	0-0	49	20	20	59

In his first season at Nebraska, Culp earned Big Ten Kicker of the Year honors with his 13-for-15 FG season. That mark also ties him for 2nd among returning kickers for the best accuracy rate on at least 15 attempts. He put on a pair of 3-for-3 performances, one on the road at Penn State and the other featuring the longest Nebraska FG since 2016.

Cameron Dicker – Texas

Class: Senior - Hometown: Austin, Texas

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
15	21	71.4	0-0	6-6	4-6	4-7	1-2	53	50	51	95

A starter since he stepped on campus, Dicker needs just 61 points to become the Longhorns' all-time leading kick-scorer, and third among all players in program history. His 19 career field goals from at least 40 yards rank fourth among active kickers and second by those with three seasons of experience.

Christopher Dunn – NC State

Class: Senior - Hometown: Lexington, North Carolina

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
12	17	70.6	0-0	1-1	7-9	2-4	2-3	53	43	43	79

A Groza semifinalist in 2019, Dunn already ranks as NC State's all-time leading field goal kicker with 56 career makes. That total comes on a career accuracy rate of 83.6%, making him one of just three active kickers who can claim both 50 FGs and an 80% connection rate. He needs 43 points to become the program's all-time leading scorer.

Hunter Duplessis – UTSA

Class: Super Senior - Hometown: San Antonio, Texas

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
17	20	85	0-0	7-7	5-5	4-6	1-2	50	40	41	91

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Duplessis went over a year without missing a field goal, connecting on 23 straight from 9/23/19 to 10/24/20. His 85% accuracy ranked 4th among FBS kickers who attempted at least 20 kicks last year. He set UTSA's single-season scoring mark, with 15 coming in a 51-48 2OT victory over Texas State capped by his 29-yard winner.

Alex Hale – Oklahoma State

Class: Junior - Hometown: Port Frederick, New South Wales, Australia

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	14	92.9	1-1	4-4	5-6	3-3	0-0	44	18	18	57

A 202 Groza semifinalist, Hale's season was cut short by an injury that caused him to miss the Cowboys' final five games. At the time of the injury, his average of 2.17 field goals per game was the best in the country. Though he only played in 6 games, he still led Oklahoma State in scoring, and provided more than the margin in 3 victories.

Charlie Ham – Duke

Class: Sophomore - Hometown: Atlanta, Georgia

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	15	86.7	0-0	5-5	5-6	3-4	0-0	47	30	32	69

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Ham was a model of consistency for the Blue Devils, making field goals in all but two games of his freshman season. More impressively, all four of his multi-FG games came on the road, including the first two attempts of his career coming in South Bend against Notre Dame as well as a 3-for-3 performance in a win at Syracuse.

John Hoyland – Wyoming

Class: Sophomore - Hometown: Broomfield, Colorado

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	14	92.9	0-0	5-5	6-7	2-2	0-0	42	16	16	55

Wyoming didn't play their first game until October 24th, so Hoyland didn't have any time to spare in his freshman campaign. In the season opener at Nevada, he went 4-for-4 on FGs including a 42 yarder with 23 seconds left to send it to overtime. He finished strong too, with a pair of 3-for-3 performances en route to an average of 2.17 FGs per game.

Blake Mazza – SMU

Class: Senior – Hometown: Plano, Texas

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
4	4	100	0-0	1-1	2-2	1-1	0-0	49	12	13	24

[stats from 2020 at Washington State]

A finalist for the Groza in 2019, the Texas native Mazza has come back home after three years at Washington State. Among active kickers with that much experience, his career 85% accuracy rate ranks third, bolstered by his memorable 20-for-21 sophomore season and staying perfect on four attempts in a very short season for the Cougars last year.

Chase McGrath – Tennessee

Class: Senior – Hometown: Newport Beach, California

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
14	17	82.4	0-0	4-4	6-7	3-5	1-1	52	54	54	96

[stats from 2019 at USC]

A grad transfer from USC, McGrath joins Tennessee on a streak of 70 consecutive made extra point attempts dating back to the 2017 season. He has 31 FGs in 30 career games, including one of the top scoring performances by a kicker in recent memory, going 5-for-5 on FGs and 4-for-4 on XPs for a 19-point game in the 2018 season opener against UNLV.

Marshall Meeder – Central Michigan

Class: Sophomore - Hometown: Eaton Rapids, Michigan

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
8	8	100	0-0	4-4	0-0	2-2	2-2	53	16	17	40

Only 2020 Groza finalist Jake Oldroyd can join Meeder in claiming a perfect 2020 campaign that includes multiple attempts from over 50 yards out. The freshman nailed a long distance kick in each of two 3-for-3 performances, both coming on the road in post-Thanksgiving weather. His 53 yarder against Toledo was the longest by a MAC kicker.

Harrison Mevis – Missouri

Class: Sophomore - Hometown: Warsaw, Indiana

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
17	20	85	1-1	7-7	4-5	2-3	3-4	52	28	28	79

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Mevis led all freshman kickers with 3 FGs from 50 yards or more, with one of those coming in the top performance by an FBS kicker last season. Against Arkansas, he scored a remarkable 20 points, going 5-for-5 on both FGs and XPs, including a 32-yard FG as time expired to lift Mizzou to a 50-48 victory and create an instant legend.

Brayden Narveson – Western Kentucky

Class: Junior - Hometown: Scottsdale, Arizona

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	14	92.9	0-0	1-1	5-5	6-6	1-2	53	27	27	66

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Narveson tied for third in accuracy among FBS kickers who attempted at least 10 field goals last season. His only miss on the year came from 50 yards, but he bettered that try when he hit from 53 for the third-longest FG in program history. Among returning kickers, last year's 12 makes from at least 30 yards tie for 4th most.

Jake Oldroyd – BYU

Class: Junior - Hometown: Southlake, Texas

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	13	100	0-0	5-5	1-1	4-4	3-3	54	60	62	99

A finalist for the 2020 Groza Award, Oldroyd showed a rare combination of accuracy and leg strength with more than half of his 13 perfect attempts coming from at least 40 yards out. His 3 long distance field goals are the most by a kicker in a perfect season since at least 2004. At one point he hit 72 straight extra point attempts, setting a new BYU record.

Jack Podlesny – Georgia

Class: Junior - Hometown: Saint Simons Island, Georgia

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	16	81.3	0-0	2-2	6-7	2-4	3-3	53	38	38	77

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Podlesny finished his first season as the Bulldogs' kicker on the highest of notes, going 3-for-3 including a 53-yard game-winner in Georgia's 24-21 comeback over undefeated Cincinnati in the Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl. In addition to the win, the kick gave him 3 from 50+ yards, tied for third among returning kickers.

B.T. Potter – Clemson

Class: Senior - Hometown: Rock Hill, South Carolina

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
18	23	78.3	0-0	5-5	5-8	6-7	2-3	52	61	62	115

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Potter finished second in the nation in kick-scoring, hitting double-digits in seven games. In just two full seasons, he's already tied for the program's all-time lead with 5 field goals from at least 50 yards out. In Clemson's two battles with Notre Dame last year, he went a combined 6-for-6 on field goals and totaled 26 points.

Matt Quinn – UAB

Class: Sophomore - Hometown: Spanish Fort, Alabama

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
11	12	91.7	0-0	2-2	4-5	5-5	0-0	48	31	32	64

Over the final five games of the season, Quinn finished with a remarkable 10-for-10 field goal total. That includes a 3-for-3 performance on the road in the Conference USA Championship game in which he hit from 42 and 48 yards in the fourth quarter to secure the Blazers' 22-13 win over Marshall.

Jadon Redding – Utah

Class: Junior - Hometown: Fredericksburg, Virginia

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
8	8	100	0-0	2-2	3-3	3-3	0-0	44	17	17	41

Staying perfect on eight attempts in just five games, Redding led the Pac-12 in both accuracy and field goals per game. He put up matching 3-for-3 FG, 3-for-3 XP performances in back-to-back win over Oregon State and on the road against Colorado. In two seasons, his career line at Utah stands at 18-for-21 on field goals and 73-for-73 on extra points.

Will Reichard – Alabama

Class: Junior - Hometown: Hoover, Alabama

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
14	14	100	0-0	5-5	5-5	3-3	1-1	52	84	84	126

A finalist for the 2020 Groza Award, Reichard didn't miss an attempt of any kind last season. His 14 field goals were the most by a kicker without a miss, while his 126 total points led the nation in kick-scoring. Despite not getting a field goal attempt in three games, he notched double-digit points in 8 out of 13 contests, including the CFP National Championship.

Matt Ruffolo – Kentucky

Class: Super Senior - Hometown: Centerville, Ohio

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
12	14	85.7	0-0	6-6	4-4	1-3	1-1	50	22	23	58

Ruffolo has made field goals in each of Kentucky's last eight games, including a massively important 3-for-3 FG performance in the Wildcats' 23-21 upset of ranked NC State in the TaxSlayer Gator Bowl. It was the first time a Kentucky kicker had made three field goals in a bowl game and sets him up to enter the season a streak of six straight makes.

Nick Sciba – Wake Forest

Class: Senior - Hometown: Clover, South Carolina

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
14	17	82.4	0-0	2-3	5-6	7-8	0-0	46	31	31	73

A Groza semifinalist in both 2019 and 2020, Sciba has developed into one of college football's premier kickers. Among kickers with at least 50 career attempts, his 89.1% accuracy rate is not only easily the best by an active kicker, it puts him within a percentage point of finishing his career as the most accurate field goal kicker in FBS history.

Andre Szmyt – Syracuse

Class: Senior - Hometown: Vernon Hills, Illinois

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
9	11	81.8	0-0	3-4	2-2	4-4	0-1	48	23	24	50

The 2018 Lou Groza Award winner, Szmyt enters the year tied for fourth among active kickers with 56 field goals, on a career accuracy rate of 86.2% that would put him in the top ten all-time. He needs just 4 field goals and 44 points to become Syracuse's program record holder in each category.

Brandon Talton – Nevada

Class: Junior - Hometown: Vacaville, California

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
15	18	83.3	0-0	6-7	6-7	3-3	0-1	49	28	31	73

A Groza semifinalist in both 2019 and 2020, Talton led the Mountain West in field goals last season and finished second in accuracy. He provided more than half of Nevada's points in a 26-21 win over San Diego State, hitting 4 field goals and 2 PATs. Among kickers with just two seasons of experience, his 36 FGs rank third, with 23 of them coming from 30+ yards.

James Turner – Louisville

Class: Junior - Hometown: Saline, Michigan

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
13	15	86.7	0-0	3-3	4-4	5-5	1-3	50	40	40	79

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, Turner was perfect on attempts from 50 yards and closer, with a pair of 52-yard misses the only blemishes on an otherwise pristine season. Among returning kickers who made at least 10 field goals from 30+ yards, his 86.7% overall accuracy rate ranks third.

Cade York – LSU

Class: Junior - Hometown: McKinney, Texas

FGM	FGA	FG%	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	LONG	XPM	XPA	PTS
18	21	85.7	0-0	4-4	5-6	3-4	6-7	57	36	36	90

A 2020 Groza semifinalist, York can confidently lay claim to the nation's strongest leg. His 6 FGs from 50+ last year make him just the 4th FBS kicker to hit that total in a season since 2004. His 10 career long distance makes are double that of any other active kicker, and have come in just two seasons. His 57-yard winner at Florida is the longest FG in LSU history.