Incomparable
Homecoming and McLane make unbeatable pair
JOSHUA DAVIS | Sports Writer

The No. 1 Baylor Bears take on Iowa State for Homecoming this Saturday, where they are the best team in the country at winning at home. Under head coach Art Briles, the team has won 19 straight home games in Waco, the longest active FBS winning streak.

"It's impressive and I think it says a lot about who we are as a fan base, how we play as a team and how we protect our turf," Briles said. "It's all good, but I think that just shows how hard it is consistently winning." Baylor's premier win streak started nearly three years ago on Homecoming against the Kansas Jayhawks.

Since that time, there's been nothing but home cooking for the Bears as they've carried off six after nine. The Bears have won their last five homecoming matchups. The past three games have been especially advantageous for Baylor as it has scored those by an average margin of 43.3 points.

"We have a point to prove every time we step out on that field," said junior wide receiver Corey Coleman. "We can't tolerate anyone, so we have to put our foot down and cut it out of our heart. We have to win, and we don't want to let anyone down."

Sophomore linebacker Taylor Young said he always looks forward to the excitement of homecoming and playing in front of a large crowd.

"It's always a big deal at home," Young said. "Selling everybody in that green and gold, and other people that haven't been able to come to the games to witness it. It's a big deal to celebrate homecoming."

Homecoming just has a different feel, senior left tackle Spencer Drango said.

"As homecoming, there's a lot more people around Baylor, which is a really cool atmosphere to be around," Drango said. "It's electric, not just at the game, but the campus atmosphere to be around, "It's just a really fun environment to take part in."

Buck was one of the first five schools to ever celebrate Homecoming and Drango recognized the significance.

"I think we have [one of] the longest Homecoming traditions in the United States, so it's a big game for Baylor and the University as a whole," Drango said.

"We have lots of alumni coming back, but for us it's just another game on the schedule."

Quarterback both Briles asserted that the 92nd playing of the homecoming game represents a lot for the fans and alumni coming back to support the team, but agreed with Drango saying it's just like any other game.

The Bears will take on the Cyclones at McLane Stadium at 11 a.m. Saturday. The game will be televised on ESPN.

"It's a really good player, but we're great defensively," Johnson said. "I think the physicality of the two games were probably tougher than the fact that we are playing two games. It's something most of those guys are used to. We were fortunate to have a few weeks when we didn't have that, and I think it helped us to be healthy this far into the season."

Bennett is preparing for Wednesday practice in his office overlooking Baylor's outdoor facility.

"Bennett oozes intensity and fire. As we begin speaking, he opens letters and answers questions with the same verve he exhibits on the sideline at McLane Stadium.

He knows the criticism his defense has gotten since he's been at Baylor. He knows Baylor is perceived as an "offensive" school that can't stop anyone. He knows head coach Art Briles is big and his players are tough.

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"We begin with Carthage and the Carthage game starts at 11 a.m. Saturday at 11 a.m. in Carthage," Briles said. "The game will be televised on ESPN.

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Better Than Ever

Baylor reaches new heights halfway through season

TYLER CAGLE
Sports Writer

At the midway point in the season, Baylor has shown it is one of the best football programs in the nation.

After going 4-0, securing bowl eligibility and soaring to the No. 2 ranking in the polls, spirits are high for the Bears.

Fortunately, the Bears are the nation’s top offense in both points scored per game and yards per game. A major factor of that success is the play of the offensive line, led by 2014 All-American left tackle Spencer Drango.

“As an offensive line, we’ve worked one of our goals—six tackles. We’ve worked extremely hard, which is great, but we know we still have a lot of work to do,” Drango said.

For Drango individually, his season has been terrific, up to this point. A preseason candidate for the Outland Trophy and Wuerffel Trophy, Drango has not disappointed on or off the field.

Earlier this week, the Outland Trophy announced their top 25 rankings and Drango led the pack with a score almost 18 points higher than second place.

Individual accomplishments have come across the board for Baylor players this season. One huge standout for the Bears is junior wide receiver Corey Coleman.

Coleman has already broken the school record for touchdowns in a single season, previously set by Kendall Wright. He broke Coleman only 6 games to catch 16 touchdowns, an astounding feat.

“[The record] means a lot. Like I’ve said time and time again, [Kendall] is a great football player but for one week it’s Coleman’s time. He has broken the record for touchdown catches in a single season, previously set by Kendall Wright. It’s nothing really right now, “ Russell said.

The dual-threat Garland native recently had a record setting performance of his own. Against West Virginia last weekend, Russell has settled into his own, leading the nation in passer efficiency.

After initially looking a bit rusty against SMU and Lamar, Russell has settled into his own, bringing to the table. "We can’t get around him for four years, so we know what he brings to the table." Coleman said.

"It’s only been six games and people have been talking an awful lot. While Coleman gets all the attention, junior quarterback Seth Russell has also performed at an extremely high level.

“[The record] means a lot. Like I’ve said time and time again, [Kendall] is a great football player but for one week it’s Coleman’s time. He has broken the record for touchdown catches in a single season, previously set by Kendall Wright. It’s nothing really right now, “ Russell said.

"It’s not until we get the national championship, “ Russell said. "It’s not until we get the national championship, and then we can look back and reminisce. We have that focus and we have that goal, and that’s win another Big 12 championship, and then have an opportunity to hopefully play for a national championship,” Russell said.

Defensive linemen Shawn Oakman and Andrew Billings were kicked as top NFL draft prospects coming into the season, and they have not disappointed so far.

Oakman, who became an Internet sensation for his imposing stature, has recorded 17 tackles, 3.5 of which are for a loss. He has also recorded 3 sacks on the season, bringing his career total to 16, which is the most in Baylor school history.

In the interior, Billings has been equally dominant, recording 23 tackles and eight tackles for loss, including a sack.

Billings has been the victim of numerous double and triple teams but has not stopped the junior defensive tackle.

“You can’t double-team me all the time, you have to worry about what he’s [Billings] doing. He’s not susceptible of making plays in the backfield as I am. If he does things the right way, it makes it 10 times easier,” Oakman said of Billings’ ability.

The duo was the Big 12’s best statistical defensive line tandem last season, and that success has continued so far.

The Bears have earned their No. 2 rank in the nation with no doubt and dominant play across the board.

With the second place rank a school high, continue to watch the Bears this season. With their game against Iowa State, the Bears start one of the toughest remaining schedules in the nation.

The Bears will begin by traveling to Manhattan, Kansas, for Kansas State Wildcats.

They then will host No. 17 Oklahoma Sooners before heading on a two-game road stretch facing No. 14 Oklahoma State in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

After their game against the Cowboys, the Bears will play the game everyone has been waiting for: the long awaited game against No. 1 TCU.

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The Horned Frogs have had to endure an entire year of 61-58 chants after the Bears pulled off an improbable comeback last season. The Bears will then host No. 14 Oklahoma State in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

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Bennett's stepdaughter, Katie White, is a Baylor alumna and former varsity soccer player. Among those in the crowd? Phil Bennett. "Some people like to do what they do, they really struggle with change. Phil has embraced it," Gush said. "I've only been anything but a head coach."

"He never lied, he never told me he was the one again," Bennett acknowledged that at times, the tenor of the program began to change. "I really struggle with change. Phil has embraced it," Bennett said. "I've only been anything but a head coach."

While the effect was there, the defense statistically was worse than it was under former defensive coordinator Brian Norwood. "I didn't have to come to Baylor to prove myself as a defensive coordinator," Bennett said. "Let if people who come here forget where they've been."

"I still very much believe defense wins championships," Gush said. "And we have consistently gotten better since Coach Bennett has gotten here."

The real difference has come since the beginning of the 2013 season. Bennett's defenses have held opponents to 275 yards per game and 24.8 points. The Bears have surrendered only 250 yards per game and came-out teams by four touchdowns.

Most importantly, Baylor football has posted a 24-4 record with two Big 12 championships over that three-year stretch.

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Men’s basketball looks to build on success

JOSHUA DAVIS
Sports Writer

Baylor men’s basketball was ranked No. 11 in the 2015-16 USA Today Preseason Coaches’ Poll, marking the ninth straight year the Bears have been ranked to start the season. And for the fourth time BU has been listed in the preseason coaches’ poll.

The No. 21 selection in the coaches’ poll is the fourth-highest in program history.

Last year, Baylor finished fourth in the Big 12 and earned a No. 3 seed in the NCAA Tournament for a second consecutive season, giving the program its first-ever back-to-back NCAA Tournament appearances.

Head coach Scott Drew is hopeful that the team can get back to the NCAA Tournament after a heartbreaking loss in the opening round last season.

With nine returning players, including All-Big 12 first-team selection, senior Rico Gathers, and Big 12 Freshman of the Year selection, senior Taurean Prince, the Bears look primed to reach March Madness.

“I think coaches remember those losses for a lifetime,” Drew said Tuesday at the Big 12 Men’s Basketball Media Day. “When I’m 80 and 90 years old, I’ll probably still remember that game and other big losses because they just stick with you … I think coaches remember those things. But when the players have that burning desire and they’re the ones that have that experience, that’s more beneficial. Hopefully, at the end of this year, that’s something that will have helped us.”

Both returning forwards were named to the Midseason All-Big 12 team, which recognizes the top power forwards in Division I men’s basketball.

While the two seniors were selected onto the preseason watch list, their play styles couldn’t be more different.

Gathers, a native of Laplace, LA, has been described by many as a bruiser.

He ranked third in the Big 12 with 15.6 points per game in conference play. Following his impressive 2014-15 campaign, Gathers was named as a second-team All-Big 12 honoree selection.

While the two seniors were selected onto the preseason watch list, their play styles couldn’t be more different.

Prince, on the other hand, relied on his defense to anchor the team.

His efficiency on the court gave him a spot on Team USA for the 2015 Pan American Games, where he started every game and helped the team win a bronze medal.

“First and foremost, if he can become a 75 to 80 percent free throw shooter, his production is going to go way up,” Drew said. “Second thing, because we have a lot of length in practice, him finishing over length every day is something that will help. His jump shot has improved, it’s a lot better, a lot better routine.”

Prince, set the other hand, relied on his quick first step and three-point accuracy. 395 (last season) to average 11.9 points in just 26.3 minutes per game.

“Prince, set the other hand, relied on his quick first step and three-point accuracy. He ranked third in the Big 12 with 15.6 points per game in conference play. Following the season, his production in Butler caused him to a spot on Team USA for the 2015 Pan American Games, where he started every game and helped the team win a bronze medal.

“I think this summer really took his game to another level,” Drew said. “He’s approaching each and every day at practice, it’s great to see. That game will tip off at 8:30 p.m. and be televised on FOX Sports Southwest-Plus.

That game will open the 2015-16 season for the Bears.

“I think a quicker clock will help with that,” Drew said. “Officials are going to call it closer this year, which will give more freedom of movement, which will help with the scoring as well. Our basketball team scores a lot of points, and it’s fun to watch.

Baylor will look to get its season started on a positive note where it opens the 2015-16 season on Nov. 13 against Stephen F. Austin at the Ferrell Center.

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Drew said he believes the new timer will be a positive note when it opens the 2015-16 season on Nov. 13 against Stephen F. Austin at the Ferrell Center.

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Come on and jam.
Top 5 improve stock after dominant weekend

HeismanWatch: Week 7

1. RB LEONARD FOURNETTE (LSU)
   - Frogs’ quarterback has put up some astounding numbers to begin the season.
   - Boykin is gaining momentum to put himself in the Heisman race.
   - Tremendous performance on the ground against the Crimson Tide.
   - Boykin continues to be right on the outside of my Heisman rankings.
   - The 6-foot-1, 230 pound RB will face an uphill battle against a touted defensive team.
   - For the 5th straight game, Fournette is on a roll.
   - The problem for Elliott is that if he wants to move up in the rankings, he has to put up those mind-blowing numbers.
   - Elliott may have edged out the 5-foot-11, 225-pound cooker as a top RB to make a statement and up his stock.

2. RB EZEKIEL ELLIOTT (OHIO STATE)
   - Elliott ran away with 349-yard rushing, one of the best in the nation.
   - His most impressive stat is his yards per carry (8.7).
   - Elliott continues to pile up yards, but not in the way that some other running backs have been putting up solid numbers.
   - Next up for the Horned Frogs is a bye week before a home game against West Virginia.
   - Elliott is on a 100-yard rushing streak.
   - Next up for the Bears is a home game after a heartbreaker.

3. WR COREY COLEMAN (BAYLOR)
   - Coleman to move up to No. 3 next week.
   - His Heisman status has continued to rise and he’s got the most momentum out of the contenders on this list.
   - Coleman has stiffened his case over the course of his six games.
   - He’s been on mine for weeks.
   - Coleman to the No. 5 spot by totaling 223 yards and five touchdowns.
   - On the season, Coleman has 477 yards and 36 touchdowns (an FBS best).
   - Next up for the Bears is a home game against Iowa State.

4. WR COBEY COLEMAN (BAYLOR)
   - Coleman has continued to make an appearance on many national Heisman Watch lists.
   - After last week’s performance (10 catches, 198 yards and three touchdowns), West Virginia head coach Dana Holgorsen called Coleman the best player in college football.
   - Coleman may have edged out the 5-foot-11, 160-pound receiver this week, but I expect Coleman to move up to No. 3 next week.

5. DB DAVIN COOK (FLORIDA STATE)
   - After suffering a hamstring injury against Louisville, Cook fought to display his dominance.
   - His 14 touchdowns are the second-most in the nation.
   - In four of his six games, he’s got the most momentum out of the contenders on this list.
   - In four of his six games, the Bears remain undefeated.

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The Baylor Lariat

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   - After last week’s performance (10 catches, 198 yards and three touchdowns), West Virginia head coach Dana Holgorsen called Coleman the best player in college football.
   - Coleman may have edged out the 5-foot-11, 160-pound receiver this week, but I expect Coleman to move up to No. 3 next week.

5. DB DAVIN COOK (FLORIDA STATE)
   - After suffering a hamstring injury against Louisville, Cook fought to display his dominance.
   - His 14 touchdowns are the second-most in the nation.
   - In four of his six games, he’s got the most momentum out of the contenders on this list.

Friday, October 23, 2015
The Baylor Lariat

#HeismanWatch: Week 7

Top 5 improve stock after dominant weekend

1. RB LEONARD FOURNETTE (LSU)
   - Frogs’ quarterback has put up some astounding numbers to begin the season.
   - Boykin is gaining momentum to put himself in the Heisman race.
   - Tremendous performance on the ground against the Crimson Tide.
   - Boykin continues to be right on the outside of my Heisman rankings.
   - The 6-foot-1, 230 pound RB will face an uphill battle against a touted defensive team.
   - For the 5th straight game, Fournette is on a roll.
   - The problem for Elliott is that if he wants to move up in the rankings, he has to put up those mind-blowing numbers.
   - Elliott may have edged out the 5-foot-11, 225-pound cooker as a top RB to make a statement and up his stock.

2. RB EZEKIEL ELLIOTT (OHIO STATE)
   - Elliott ran away with 349-yard rushing, one of the best in the nation.
   - His most impressive stat is his yards per carry (8.7).
   - Elliott continues to pile up yards, but not in the way that some other running backs have been putting up solid numbers.
   - Next up for the Horned Frogs is a bye week before a home game against West Virginia.
   - Elliott is on a 100-yard rushing streak.
   - Next up for the Bears is a home game after a heartbreaker.

3. WR COREY COLEMAN (BAYLOR)
   - Coleman to move up to No. 3 next week.
   - His Heisman status has continued to rise and he’s got the most momentum out of the contenders on this list.
   - Coleman has stiffened his case over the course of his six games.
   - He’s been on mine for weeks.
   - Coleman to the No. 5 spot by totaling 223 yards and five touchdowns.
   - On the season, Coleman has 477 yards and 36 touchdowns (an FBS best).
   - Next up for the Bears is a home game against Iowa State.

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Cagle’s Corner: Rankings

Friday, October 23, 2015

BY TYSER CAGLE

The Baylor Bears

While the college football playoff committee will not release their official rankings until after the ninth week of the season, hyperbole is always fun. As the college football fan, you build your own rankings week after week, hoping that the committee will get it right and know what you know.

At the midway point in the 2015 season, I’d say it’s about time for some rankings. There are no top five if the season ended right now.

4. LSU TIGERS

Baylor tops the list after seven weeks of college football

Cagle’s Corner: Rankings

three potential Heisman quarterbacks.

week and while the Buckeyes are undefeated, rankings are all about who is the best team that the Tigers will win a playoff spot.

rankings 15th in the nation in terms of yards allowed per game. If they can continue that play and play this consistently, they have not been consistent.

the Bears have been relatively disappointing this season, they are still loaded with talent and the Utes have shut them down.

with the rest of the PAC-12 in shambles, Utah has risen up and played tremendously in 2015.

definitive terms in the conference. I know our girls are up for any challenge, but she’s a very good player.

The Longhorns have a very strong defense, Jobson said.

For us, if we play a great defensive team or test, we’ve been able to create opportunities.

Not many backfields, but I just think we are good strength to create opportunities. It will just be a matter of being able to get one behind her because she is a really good goalkeeper.

We want to go out and score, but not necessarily score a lot of goals. We want to control the game and win as many as we can. We want to have more opportunities to score.

Karen Coleman is as well.

WHERE THE BEARS RANK

We are top five if the season ended right now.

A/B after all.

The Bears lead the nation in scoring offense. The Bears lead the nation in scoring offense. The Bears lead the nation in scoring offense. The Bears lead the nation in scoring offense. The Bears lead the nation in scoring offense. The Bears lead the nation in scoring offense. The Bears lead the nation in scoring offense.

Searchable Uranium quadrants.

because she is a really good goalkeeper.

The Utes

With the Bearcats surging in the MAC, the Bears have the best player in the nation to rank in the top ten in both passing and rushing (2nd rushing). Quarterback Cardale Jones and J.T. Barrett struggling as tandems in the backfield, with Booker emerging as a true Heisman dark horse.

Definitely, the same Utah spirit of power and strength reside in Salt Lake City.

The Bears are 6-0 and they have the best player in the nation in running back Leonard Fournette.

Russell leads the nation in passer efficiency and yard performance while Coleman is fourth in receiving yards and first in touchdown catches. This could be the best offensive college football has seen since Oklahoma in 2008, with the Bears leading the nation in total yards per game.

For us, it’s always been about what we are capable of doing, and right now being fresh and being rewarded is going to be the main thing for us to give us the best chance in the two games this weekend.

“We need to stay ahead of what we are capable of doing, and right now being fresh and being rewarded is going to be the main thing for us to give us the best chance in the two games this weekend.

Kind of where everybody is in this week, we’ve been a little on the fringe. Everybody wants the championship!”

The Bears play 7 p.m. Friday at the Gaylord. Rice-Eccles Stadium in Salt Lake City.

With the Bearcats surging in the MAC, the Bears have the best player in the nation to rank in the top ten in both passing and rushing (2nd rushing). Quarterback Cardale Jones and J.T. Barrett struggling as tandems in the backfield, with Booker emerging as a true Heisman dark horse.

Definitely, the same Utah spirit of power and strength reside in Salt Lake City. While the Utes rank 26th in terms of total defense, they are 26th in allowing only 15.6 yards per game and rank 13th in rushing yards allowed per game.

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A huge part of that offensive firepower last week was junior quarterback Seth Russell’s dual-threat ability. Russell torched the West Virginia Mountaineers last weekend for 380 yards passing and 160 yards rushing, earning numerous player of the week awards.

“Nervous wouldn’t be the correct way to describe my feelings,” Briles said. “I think we just try to be intelligent with him. We realize it’s a position that if you want to see grandma while she’s knitting get up and scream, it’s usually when they’re tackling the quarterback.”

Protecting Russell is the first key in Baylor’s gameplan as the junior quarterback is first in the nation in passer efficiency. Along with Russell, junior wide receiver Corey Coleman has gained a huge following this season. The Richardson native has caught a school record 16 touchdown passes, which is also top in the nation. Following a 10 catch, 199-yard and three-touchdown explosion against West Virginia, Mountaineers’ head coach Dana Holgorsen called Coleman the best player in the nation.

“I 100 percent agree,” Russell said. “What has he done not to prove that? He’s proven it every day he steps on the field.”

While Coleman and Russell hold all the hype in the passing game, junior running back Shock Linwood has also developed into a top running back in the country. Linwood has gained 803 yards on just 94 carries, averaging an astounding 8.5 yards per carry.

“Shock is one of those backs who’s always going to be there,” Drango said. “He’s very consistent and he’s always improving. One guy is almost never going to take him down. He’ll bounce off guys or spin off guys or jump over guys. He’s almost always going to get positive yards, so he’s a great back for us.”

While the Bears are very good on offense, sometimes their defense is just plain scary. The Bears have been suspect to blown coverages and missed tackles all season, especially in the first half. However, the Bears have played noticeably better as of late, forcing turnovers and punts even after the offense gives them short rest. While the Bears retained some starters on defense this past, linebacker Bryce Hager’s departure left an obvious hole.

Senior linebacker Grant Campbell has filled the hole so far this season very well, playing consistent throughout games.

“He’s been a really good leader, makes all the calls defensively and offensively, and he’s a great guy,” Briles said. “He’s exactly what Coach [Phil] Bennett is looking for on that side of the ball at that position.”

Campbell’s leadership and instinct on the defensive side of the ball will be key against a solid Iowa State offense led by freshman running back Mike Warren.

Warren’s been very solid in a on-track season, rushing 93 times for 652 yards and three scores. With a homecoming crowd expected to fill McLane Stadium to capacity and the Iowa State defense allowing almost 462 yards of offense, expect the Bears to do just as they please.
Baylor alumni around the globe reflect the very best of Baylor University. The recipients of the 2015-2016 Baylor Meritorious Achievement Awards are:

**Chip and Joanna Gaines:** Alumni of the Year

**Victor Boutros:** Young Alumnus of the Year

**Billy and Dawn Ray:** Pro Ecclesia Medal of Service

**Sue Mayborn:** Pro Texana Medal of Service

**Dr. Michael Attas:** Contributions to the Professions in Medicine & Healthcare

**Dr. Harry “Fred” Tibbals III:** Contributions to the Professions in Research

**Grant and Donell Teaff:** Legendary Mentor Award

**George and Martha Chandler:** Baylor Legacy Award

**Matt and Dot Miller:** Baylor Legacy Award

**Winston Wolfe:** Baylor Legacy Award

**Louise Hemmington Ornelas:** Baylor Founders Medal

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**FRIDAY, OCT. 23**

**ROSENBALM FOUNTAIN DEDICATION**

4 p.m., Fountain Mall. Join members of the Baylor family as we celebrate the legacy of the Rosenbalm family and a beautiful fountain. (Inclined weather: McLuhan-Connally Faculty Center)

**EXTRAVAGANZA, PEP RALLY & FRIDAY NIGHT FLASHBACK**

7-11 p.m. Enjoy a variety of family-friendly activities, see the new eternal flame, gather with friends and cheer on the Baylor Bears. Pep Rally begins 9 p.m. New location: Waco Convention Center.

**SINGSPIRATION**

7 p.m., Seventh and James Baptist Church. Join in fellowship, worship and praise with the Baylor family, featuring the alumni choir.

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**SATURDAY, OCT. 24**

**PARADE**

The parade has been cancelled due to inclined weather. Watch for information on parade float displays in the coming weeks.

**FOOTBALL**

11 a.m., Iowa State vs. Baylor

**PIGSKIN REVUE**

7 p.m., Waco Hall. Enjoy the final performance of Pigskin.

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2015-16 BAYLOR UNIVERSITY MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

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- David and Shirley Lake: Baylor Legacy Award
- Matt and Dot Miller: Baylor Legacy Award
- Winston Wolfe: Baylor Legacy Award
- Louise Hemmington Ornelas: Baylor Founders Medal

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**HOMECOMING PARKING**

Homecoming parking procedures are in place. Visit baylor.edu/homecoming/parking for the most up-to-date information when making your plans.

**STRIPE McLANE STADIUM**

#StripeMcLane

Help us stripe the stadium by wearing the color assigned to your section. Visit bayerbears.com/stripemclane for your section's color.

Special thanks to Baylor Chamber of Commerce for the many hours of work that have gone into preparation and execution of events for this very special weekend in the life of the University. Your dedication to Baylor and the Homecoming tradition truly reflects your motto: “Anything for Baylor.”