

Lanier Football Official Association

Yearly Awards Criteria

Updated November 2025

Horizon Award:

The Horizon Award is given to an individual that has two – five years' experience as an official and has begun to get his feet under himself as a solid official. Things are starting to click, and the action is slowing down for them. He has been around for a few years and has shown signs of carrying himself as an experienced veteran official.

Mike O'Neil Memorial Rookie of the Year Award:

Mike O'Neil was a founding member of Lanier Football Officials Association. Originally named: Blueridge Football Officials. He was a member for over forty years and during his time he served as President, Assignor and Secretary. Some years doing all three jobs at the same time. Mike was dedicated to this association and the training of new officials. The Mike O'Neil Rookie of the Year Award was named in his memorial in 2014.

The Rookie of the Year Award is presented to a 1st year official, that shows dedication and solid determination of becoming a solid Official. He has shown great potential in the field with good judgment and positive reviews from other officials.

Tim Tipton Official of the Year Award:

Tim Tipton has given decades of time, effort, commitment and dedication to both the art of officiating and the reins of leadership within the Georgia High School Association and the Blue Ridge/Lanier Football Officials Association. He has served his association as an official, crew chief, officer, mentor, President, Treasurer, Board Member and countless other roles that have gone unseen to those outside of leadership roles. It is for his outstanding work as an official and a leader that this honor is bestowed upon him at the annual LFOA Banquet on November 11, 2025.

The 1st Annual “Tim Tipton” Official of the Year Award will be given annually to the Official that shows commitment to their craft, mentorship to those of need, leadership within their position and an unwavering desire to help others be the best servant, model and official within the Lanier Football Officials Association.

Don Waldrip Memorial Award:

The Don Waldrip Memorial Award presented to a Veteran official. This award is presented for dedication and commitment to LFOA. Have a passion for Georgia High School Football.

Don Waldrip was dedicated and committed to Lanier Football Association for over 30 years. His uniform was always packed and stored in his truck and ready to go. He would go anywhere at anytime when called upon, He was well liked and respected by all who worked with him on the field. In 2005 Don walked off the field for the last time, just ten days later he unexpectedly passed. The next year LFOA named our Senior Veteran Award presented each year as the Don Waldrip Memorial Award.