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Contact: Al Carbone (203) 671-4421 publicity@waltercamp.org Twitter @WalterCampFF

USC's Jake Olson is the 2018 Walter Camp Award of Perseverance Recipient

New Haven, CT – Jake Olson, a senior long snapper for the USC Trojans, is the recipient of the Walter Camp Football Foundation “Award of Perseverance.”

Olson was born with retinoblastoma, a cancer of the retina. He lost his left eye when he was 10 months old and, despite numerous procedures on his other eye; he had his right eye removed when he was 12 in 2009.

After long snapping in high school as a junior and senior in 2013 and 2014 (he also played golf), he received a scholarship in 2015 to attend USC from Swim With Mike’s Physically Challenged Athletes Scholarship Fund. USC prevents contact during practice drills in which he is involved to make sure he is protected. He is guided onto the field and positioned over the ball by a teammate.

In the 2017 season opener against Western Michigan, he got into the game to snap the final PAT and did so again that mid-season against Oregon State and in the 2018 opener against UNLV.

“Jake’s story is an inspiration to all, and our Foundation is honored to recognize him with the award of perseverance,” said Michael Madera, Walter Camp Foundation president. “Jake has demonstrated courage and a strong will to succeed despite the challenges he has had to overcome.”

Olson is a motivational speaker and has co-authored two books about overcoming adversity. Olson won the 2016 Rare Disease Champion Award and was a nominee for the 2015 Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award. In 2018, he was named to the President’s Council on Sports, Fitness, and Nutrition for a 2-year term. He was the Grand Marshal and drove in the pace car at the 2018 NASCAR Truck Series Race at the Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Olson, along with the 2018 Walter Camp All-America Team and major award winners (Archie Manning – Distinguished American; Mike Golic – Man of the Year) will be recognized during the Foundation’s National Awards Dinner on Saturday, January 12, 2019 in New Haven, Conn. For tickets, please visit www.waltercamp.org.

***Walter Camp**, “The Father of American football,” first selected an All-America team in 1889. Camp – a former Yale University athlete and football coach – is also credited with developing play from scrimmage, set plays, the numerical assessment of goals and tries and the restriction of play to eleven men per side. The Walter Camp Football Foundation (www.waltercamp.org, @WalterCampFF) – a New Haven-based all-volunteer group – was founded in 1967 to perpetuate the ideals of Camp and to continue the tradition of selecting annually an All-America team. The Foundation is a member of the National College Football Awards Association (NCFAA). The NCFAA was founded in 1997 as a coalition of the major collegiate football awards to protect, preserve and enhance the integrity, influence and prestige of the game’s predominant awards. The NCFAA encourages professionalism and the highest standards for the administration of its member awards and the selection of their candidates and recipients. For more information, visit the association’s website, www.ncfaa.org*