

ASU Takes Top Seed in NCAA Football Championship

Written by Mike Flynn

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Appalachian State University received the No. 1 seed in the 2010 NCAA Division I Football Championship when the 20-team field was unveiled on Sunday morning.

As the tournament's top seed, Appalachian (9-2) received a first-round bye and begins postseason play on Saturday, Dec. 4 against the winner of Saturday's opening-round matchup between Coastal Carolina and Western Illinois.

The No. 1 seed assures the Mountaineers of home-field advantage in all games leading up to the national championship game on Jan. 7, 2011 at Pizza Hut Park in Frisco, Texas.

Appalachian earned its 18th NCAA Division I Football Championship berth by virtue of winning its record sixth-consecutive Southern Conference championship with a 7-1 record in league play. ASU's current streak of six-consecutive NCAA Division I Football Championship appearances is the second-longest in the field behind New Hampshire's seven. Montana's record 17-year run of consecutive postseason berths came to an end when it wasn't included in this year's field.

"We're very honored and pleased to be the No. 1 seed in this year's playoffs," ASU head coach Jerry Moore said. "It's a great honor to be chosen as the top team in such a strong field but, more importantly, it is a huge advantage for us to know that the road to the national championship game goes through our stadium and that we have the opportunity to play as many as three more ballgames in front of our terrific fans."

The Mountaineers face the winner between Big South champion Coastal Carolina (6-5) and Missouri Valley Conference at-large selection Western Illinois (7-4) in a second-round matchup on Dec. 4 at noon at Kidd Brewer Stadium. The game will be televised live nationally as part of ESPN's GamePlan package and on local and regional outlets to be determined. ASU routed Coastal, 45-28, in the Chanticleers' only previous postseason appearance in 2006.

Appalachian and Western Illinois have never met on the gridiron.

"We are obviously very familiar with Coastal Carolina and know that they are a very talented team," Moore said. "While we're not as familiar with Western Illinois, we have great respect for the Missouri Valley Conference and know that Western Illinois has a well-coached, hard-playing, talented squad. Whichever team we play in the second round will present a great challenge for us and we'll have to play our best to have a chance to advance."

Tickets for ASU's second-round matchup go on sale Sunday at 3 p.m. at GoASU.com. Tickets can also be purchased by phone at (828) 262-2079 or in person at the ASU athletics ticket office at the Holmes Center beginning at 9 a.m. Monday.

Should ASU continue to advance, it would host a national quarterfinal game on either Friday, Dec. 10 or Saturday, Dec. 11 and a national semifinal on either Friday, Dec. 17 or Saturday, Dec. 18 at The Rock.

NOTES: Wofford and Georgia Southern were the other teams from the Southern Conference to receive post-season berths.....The Terriers (9-2) open at home on December 4 against Jacksonville State, and Georgia Southern (7-4) receives a wildcard bid and will open the

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playoffs on the road at South Carolina State this Saturday, November 27.....William & Mary is the No.2 seed, Delaware is seeded third and Montana State is seeded fourth.....Wildcard games this weekend include Georgia Southern at South Carolina State, North Dakota State at Robert Morris, Northern Iowa at Lehigh and Coastal Carolina at Western Illinois.