Written by Mike Kelly
Tuesday, 04 January 2011 15:01

Believe it or not, the Division I Football Championship Series championship game will be played Friday night in Frisco, TX.

The game, if anyone has forgotten, pits the University of Delaware (national champion in 2003 and a national finalists in 2007) taking on Eastern Washington from the Big Sky Conference, making its first appearance in the national title game. The game will be televised on ESPN 2 Friday night at 7 pm.

And Appalachian State University, which won three consecutive titles from 2005-07, will make its presence felt this week. The Mountaineers have five individuals vying for three post-season awards. The award winners will be announced Thursday night, January 6.

Head coach Jerry Moore is among the finalists for the Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award. He's joined in that group by Mike Ayers of Wofford College. Moore won the Robinson Award in 2006; Ayers won it in 2003. Moore is the winningest coach in Southern Conference and ASU history (199-79 in 20 years at ASU; 226-127-2 overall in 27 years).

Quarterback DeAndre Presley is among the finalists for the Walter Payton Award, which goes to the best offensive player in the country at the FCS level. Armanti Edwards, who is currently playing for the Carolina Panthers in the National Football League, won the award the last two years. As a matter of fact, Edwards is the only two-time winner of the award.

Presley led ASU to 11 wins and the national quarterfinals. He was also named to The Sports Network and Associated Press All-America teams. Presley, the Southern Conference Offensive Player of the Year, racked up more than 3,600 yards of total offense and he was responsible for 34 touchdowns.

Linebacker D.J.Smith, defensive back Mark LeGree and defensive end Jabari Fletcher are finalists for the Buck Buchanan Award, which goes to the best defensive player in the country at the FCS level. Smith, who was named to The Sports Network and Associated Press All-America teams, finished his career with 525 career stops rank fourth in SoCon history and he joined Dexter Coakley, the only two-time winner of the Buchanan Award (1995 and '96) as the only players in ASU history to surpass the 500-tackle plateau.

Fletcher was named to the Walter Camp, the American Football Coaches Association, The Sports Network and Associated Press All-America squads. He led the Mountaineers with nine sacks (good for a tie for 13th nationally) and 16.5 tackles for loss (tied for 19th nationally) this season. During the course of his senior year, he was twice named SoCon Player of the Week and was also recognized as the SoCon's October Player of the Month. With 22 sacks and 44.5 tackles for loss in his career, Fletcher is one of only seven players in ASU history to register 20 sacks and 40 tackles for loss in a career.

LeGree was named to four All-America teams this fall (TSN, AP, AFCA and Walter Camp). He is also the only second three-time consensus first-team All-American in Appalachian history. Coakley, who was also a three-time NFL Pro Bowler with the Dallas Cowboys and the St. Louis Rams, is the only other Mountaineers to accomplish that feat. LeGree finished his career as the active leader in NCAA Division I with 22 career interceptions, four more than any other FCS or FBS player active in 2010. The 22 interceptions are good for second in Southern Conference history and third in ASU's all-time annals.

LeGree picked off five passes as a senior, good for a tie for 20th nationally. He also broke up eight passes and made 49 tackles in his final collegiate campaign.