The Appalachian State football team was in a fight all afternoon with the MEAC champion South Carolina State Bulldogs, but after a botched Bulldog field goal attempt, the Mountaineers were able to take advantage, win the game 20-13, and advance to the second round of the NCAA playoffs.

With senior quarterback Armanti Edwards still suffering from a pesky knee injury he sustained two weeks ago at Elon, it was up to the black shirt defense to step up.

The Apps' defensive unit held South Carolina State to 229 total yards and forced five turnovers.

The Mountaineers were able to hold South Carolina State's senior running back, and Walter Payton candidate, Will Ford, to only 22 yards on the afternoon. Ed Gainey led the Apps' defensive unit with nine tackles and an interception.

The Mountaineer offense struggled at times today as Edwards, who didn't seem to be playing at full-speed, only ran the ball a handful of times. Edwards completed 19 of his 30 passes for 218 yards and a touchdown, but also threw three interceptions.

Edwards' favorite targets were Brian Quick, who hauled in six catches for 92 yards and a touchdown, and Blake Elder, who added five receptions for 57 yards.

Junior running back, Devon Moore, was able to pick up 61 yards on the ground, most of which were in the first half. In the post game press conference, Appalachian State Head Coach Jerry Moore said the Apps' starting running back sustained a thigh bruise late in the first half, so the coaching staff didn't utilize Moore very much in the second half.

The game was knotted at 13 with just less than eight minutes left in the game when South Carolina State was set to attempt a go ahead field goal from the Mountaineer 15-yardline. The Bulldogs fumbled the snap and redshirt freshman defensive back Dominique McDuffie scooped up the ball at the 50-yardline and returned it for a touchdown.

That touchdown proved to be difference in the game as both teams played to a stalemate for the remainder of the game.

After the game, Coach Moore talked about how his team was fortunate to come away with the victory. Moore said, "When you get down into playoff time you have to be good enough and you have to be lucky enough. Both of those things worked out in our favor today."

The Mountaineers will travel to Richmond for a date with the defending national champion Spiders on Saturday. The game time has not yet been announced, but High Country Radio will pass along that information once it is made available. The Apps defeated Richmond by 20 points in the semifinals of the 2007 playoffs, but the Spiders ended the Mountaineers' season last season with a 20-point win in the second round of the playoffs.