

## ASU falls to CofC in extra innings

Written by Mike Kelly  
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It just wasn't meant to be.

The Appalachian State University baseball team battled back from an early 7-2 deficit only to lose 12-11 in 11 innings on Wednesday afternoon at Riley Park in Charleston, SC in the opening round of the Southern Conference Tournament.

Rob Kral's walk-off, run-scoring single in the bottom of the 11<sup>th</sup> off losing pitcher Chris Patterson scored the game-winning run.

"I'm very proud of our guys," said CofC coach Montee Lee. "Appalachian State scored a lot of runs in the late innings and took the lead. But our guys just kept battling. Now, we can breathe a little easier going into tomorrow's second-round game."

The Cougars (42-15) will now play either Georgia Southern or Western Carolina in a winner's bracket game Thursday night at 9 pm.

Chris Patterson (3-3), who is among the nation's elite, coughed up three earned runs on six hits in three-plus innings of work. He also walked two and struck out four. Freshman Hector Crespo, who was named to the SoCon All-Freshman team, had a huge day offensively for the Apps.

Crespo, who led the game off with a home run, had four hits in seven trips with a run scored and three runs-batted-in. His run-scoring double in the 11<sup>th</sup> inning scored Jason Wallace, who led off the frame with a double, with the go-ahead run that gave ASU an 11-10 lead. But the Mountaineers couldn't make it stand up.

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Justin Brewer led off the inning with a walk. Owen Brittle, who was pinch running for Brewer, advanced to second base when Baker Knox reached on David Towarnicky's error. A run-scoring single by Joey Bergman tied the game at 11. Cole Rakar was intentionally walked, loading the bases, and setting the stage for Kral's game-winning heroics.

Wes Hopson had three hits; Jeremy Dowdy and Tyler Zupcic each had two hits and an RBI in the loss. ASU (35-17-1) will now play in the loser's bracket on Thursday morning. They will play either Georgia Southern or Western Carolina beginning at 9 am. Our coverage begins at 8:40 am on WATA 1450 AM.