

## Mountaineers Suffer Heartbreaking Loss

Written by Mike Flynn

Saturday, 01 December 2012 21:25

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Illinois State's Shelby Harris blocked Appalachian State University's would-be game-tying extra point at the end of overtime to deal the Mountaineers a heart-wrenching 38-37 defeat in the second round of the NCAA Division I Football Championship on Saturday afternoon at Kidd Brewer Stadium. No. 7/6 Appalachian State (8-4) rallied from an 11-point deficit in the fourth quarter to send the game to overtime but Harris' blocked PAT lifted No. 16/15 Illinois State (9-3) to next weekend's national quarterfinals, where it will face the winner of Saturday night's round-of-16 matchup between No. 2-seeded Eastern Washington and Wagner.

"Sometimes the things that you think are the simplest end up making things really tough," said ASU coach Jerry Moore. "A blocked point after touchdown, I'm proud of this football team. They've done a lot of really special things and they don't realize sometimes all of the things they've done but they are really, really special. I think that if we would have won we could've made a real run at this thing."

Down 28-17 going into the final period, Appalachian put together back-to-back touchdown drives of 46 and 81 yards, sandwiched around an Illinois State field goal, to knot the score at 31-31. The Mountaineers drove to near midfield on their final possession of regulation but were forced to punt on fourth-and-one, sending the game to overtime.

Appalachian State won the coin toss and elected to play defense first in overtime but the Redbirds scored on their first play of the extra period to take a 38-31 lead. The Mountaineers needed only three plays to answer ISU's touchdown with a four-yard scoring toss from Jamal Jackson (Atlanta, Ga./North Atlanta) to Andrew Peacock (Durham, N.C./Northern Durham). Needing only the extra point to send the contest to a second overtime, Harris broke free up the middle and easily blocked Sam Martin's (Fayetteville, Ga./Starr's Mill) game-tying attempt.

"I have no clue, but I don't think there were any operation issues as to whether the snap was good," said ISU coach Brook Spack. "The hold was good. The snap was good. We come close. We felt we came very close several times over the last couple weeks. We were able to get one. Shelby has blocked a few kicks in his career. We put emphasis on this particular block, and we were able to get to where we thought we were close a couple times."

"I feel like I hit the ball well and the snap was fine and the hold was fine," said ASU kicker Sam Martin. "It was a routine kick no matter what the time of the game was. The fact that we were in overtime did not make a difference in the execution of the play for me."

Although Appalachian never led, the game was a nip-and-tuck affair throughout. Both teams made spectacular plays in the passing game (combining for 705 yards and eight touchdowns through the air), struggled to establish a presence on the ground (96 rushing yards for ISU, 51 for Appalachian) and excelled on third down (Illinois State converted 7-of-15 and Appalachian converted 8-of-17, including 7-of-9 in the second half).

There were also terrific individual battles throughout the evenly matched contest. Despite continuing to battle a knee injury that was sustained on Oct. 27 at Western Carolina and will require offseason surgery, Jackson completed 33-of-45 passes for 373 yards and two touchdowns. ISU's Matt Brown countered by completing 20-of-32 passes for 322 yards and five touchdowns, which were the most touchdown passes ever allowed by Appalachian in the postseason.

Appalachian's Sean Price (Reston, Va./South Lakes) caught a game-high 13 passes for 167 yards. In the process, he became the all-time NCAA Division I FCS freshman leader in receptions (81) and receiving yards (1,196), shattering the previous records of 71 receptions

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(set by Cal State Northridge's Drew Amerson in 1999) and 1,073 yards (set by Marshall's Randy Moss in 1996).

However, Redbird wideout Tyrone Walker was just as impressive with 10 catches for 176 yards (also the most ever compiled against the Mountaineers in the postseason) and touchdowns of 41 and 32 yards. Both Walker and tight end James O'Shaughnessy, who hauled in touchdown catches from nine and 25 yards out, matched the record for touchdown receptions against Appalachian State in a postseason game.

Defensively, Appalachian State linebacker Jeremy Kimbrough (Decatur, Ga./Cedar Grove) led all players with 15 tackles in his final collegiate game. Ben Ericken paced the Redbirds with 12 stops and was joined in double-figures by Matt Goldsmith, who also broke up two passes.

"I never thought that my last game would come down to an extra point and it's tough," Kimbrough said. "But we could've made many more plays earlier on in the game to not even get into that situation. It's just a bitter end to a season after all that we've been through going in game after game, and day after day in practice. It is tough to see it end like that and you just feel helpless, there is nothing you can do about it now."

**NOTES:** Appalachian State has lost three-consecutive NCAA Division I Football Championship games for the first time since it lost four-straight playoff games from 1987-92 ... each of the Mountaineers' last three playoff defeats have come at Kidd Brewer Stadium, marking the first time it has ever lost three-straight postseason games at home ... Appalachian fell to 1-2 all-time in postseason overtime games (W, 17-10, at New Hampshire in 1994; L, 19-16, at Montana in 2000) ... the blocked PAT notwithstanding, Martin had a spectacular day, averaging 48.9 yards over seven punts with a long of 62 and five downed inside the 20, which allowed him to set a new single-season school record with 25 punts downed inside the 20 yard line this season (previous record of 24 was set by Appalachian State Hall of Famer Harold Alexander in 1991) ... Martin also booted each of his five kickoffs out of the back of the end zone for touchbacks ... in addition to recording a career-high 11 catches for the second-straight game and finishing with 79 receiving yards, Peacock also threw the game-tying 10-yard touchdown pass out of the wildcat formation to tight end Drew Bailey (Spartanburg, S.C./Dorman) with 3:31 to go in regulation ... the touchdown pass marked the second game in a row that Peacock has thrown a touchdown pass to Bailey, which have also been the only two pass attempts of Peacock's career ... the attendance of 16,719 was the largest for a postseason opener in Appalachian State history, surpassing the 16,233 that attended the a 45-28 win over Coastal Carolina in the first round of the 2006 NCAA Division I Football Championship.....Appalachian State 's season ends at 8-4.....Illinois State (9-3) advances to the quarterfinals of the 2012 NCAA Division I Football Championship, where it will play the winner of Saturday's game between No. 2-seeded Eastern Washington and Wagner (kickoff at 6 p.m. ET) in next weekend's quarterfinals. If Eastern Washington wins, Illinois State will play at EWU on Friday, Dec. 7 or Saturday, Dec. 8. If Wagner wins, Illinois State will play Wagner at a site TBA on Friday, Dec. 7 or Saturday, Dec. 8. Quarterfinal sites, dates and game times will be announced on Sunday.....Appalachian State lost its opening game in the NCAA Division I Football Championship for the second year in a row and dropped its third-consecutive postseason game overall. The postseason losing streak is Appalachian State's longest since it lost four in a row from 1987-92.....Each of Appalachian State's last three NCAA Division I Football Championship losses have come at Kidd Brewer Stadium; marking the first time it has ever lost three-straight postseason games at home.....The loss was Appalachian State's first-ever against a current member of the Missouri Valley Football Conference (1-4).....The overtime loss was the second-straight postseason overtime loss, the

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last coming on Dec. 9, at Montana. Appalachian lost 19-16.....Appalachian State WR Sean Price broke the NCAA Division I FCS freshman records for receptions and receiving yards in a season. With 13 receptions for 167 yards in the game, he has 81 receptions for 1,1196 yards in just 10 games this season, breaking the FCS freshman records of 71 receptions (set by Cal State Northridge's Drew Amerson in 1999) and 1,073 yards (set by Marshall's Randy Moss in 1996)..... With 373 passing yards, Appalachian State Jr. QB Jamal Jackson became the fifth player in school history with 6,000 yards of total offense in a career. He finished the day with 6,147 total yards.

### ISU 38, ASU 37 (OT)

#### SCORE BY QUARTERS 1 2 3 4 OT TOTAL

Illinois State	7	7	14	3	7 -	38
Appalachian State	0	10	7	14	6 -	37

#### Scoring Summary

ILST Tyrone Walker 41 yd pass from Matt Brown (Nick Aussieker kick)

APLST Jamal Jackson 2 yd run (Sam Martin kick)

ILST James O'Shaughnessy 9 yd pass from Matt Brown (Nick Aussieker kick)

APLST Sam Martin 37 yd FG

ILST Donovan Harden 17 yd pass from Matt Brown (Nick Aussieker kick)

APLST Malachi Jones 48 yd pass from Jamal Jackson (Sam Martin kick)

ILST Tyrone Walker 32 yd pass from Matt Brown (Nick Aussieker kick)

APLST Rod Chisholm 1 yd run (Sam Martin kick)

ILST Nick Aussieker 41 yd FG

APLST Drew Bailey 10 yd pass from Andrew Peacock (Sam Martin kick)

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ILST James O'Shaughnessy 25 yd pass from Matt Brown (Nick Aussieker kick)  
APLST Andrew Peacock 4 yd pass from Jamal Jackson (blocked XP)

### Team Statistics

First Downs ISU 18, ASU 18  
Third Down Efficiency ISU 7-15, ASU 8-17  
Fourth Down Efficiency ISU 0-0, ASU 1-2  
Plays-Net Yards ISU 64-418, ASU 73-434  
Rushes-Yds ISU 32-96, ASU 27-51  
Passing Yds ISU 322, ASU 383  
Kick Return Yds ISU 0, ASU 119  
Punt Return Yds ISU 9, ASU 46  
Passes ISU 20-32-0, ASU 34-46-1  
Punts ISU 8-355, ASU 7-342  
Fumbles-Lost ISU 0-0, ASU 1-0  
Penalties-Yds ISU 7-46, ASU 5-35  
Time of Poss. ISU 31:36, ASU 28:24

### Individual Statistics

#### RUSHING

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ILST: Darrelynn Dunn 21-67, Matt Brown 5-27, Cameron Hunt 4-1, Donovan Harden 1-1, Team 1-0 APLST: Steven Miller 17-61, Rod Chisholm 2-1, Andrew Peacock 1-0, Logan Hallock 1--5, Jamal Jackson 6--6

### **PASSING**

ILST: Matt Brown 20-32-322-0

APLST: Jamal Jackson 33-45-373-1, Andrew Peacock 1-1-10-0

### **RECEIVING**

ILST: Tyrone Walker 10-176, Donovan Harden 5-68, James O'Shaughnessy 3-78, Darrelynn Dunn 2-0

APLST: Sean Price 13-167, Andrew Peacock 11-79, Steven Miller 5-10, Malachi Jones 2-61, Simms McElfresh 1-44, Tony Washington 1-12, Drew Bailey 1-10

**Photo Courtesy: Sean Price, ASU Athletics**