

Packers Release Smith

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The Green Bay Packers have released linebacker D.J. Smith, a promising young player who started nine games over two seasons and was recovering from a torn anterior cruciate ligament suffered last October. The move helps explain why the Packers re-signed linebacker Brad Jones to a three-year contract earlier this spring, a deal that will pay him at least \$4 million in 2013. Jones figured as a backup linebacker and special teams player if the rest of the Packers' linebacker crew were healthy, but that does not appear to be the case. Smith was an All-America linebacker at Appalachian State University. He was selected by the Packers in the sixth round (186th pick) of the 2011 NFL Draft. At ASU, Smith led the NCAA Division I FCS in active tackles with 525 by the end of his career. He also became the first Appalachian State player since three-time NFL Pro Bowl nominee Dexter Coakley to have more than 500 tackles in his career. In 2012, Smith should see plenty of playing time after fellow linebacker Desmond Bishop was placed on injured reserve. Smith was injured against the Houston Texans in Week 6 last October. The Packers have also released running back Brandon Saine, who coincidentally also tore his ACL in the same game as Smith.

Photo Courtesy: D.J. Smith, PHOTO SUBMITTED