

Cox Runner-Up for Rice Award

Written by Mike Flynn
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Appalachian State University running back Marcus Cox (Dacula, Ga./Dacula) placed second in voting for the 2013 Jerry Rice Award, which honors the nation's top NCAA Division I FCS freshman, The Sports Network announced on Monday. Appalachian State punter Bentley Critcher (South Daytona, Fla./Warner Christian Academy) tied for

17th in the voting, as Appalachian was the only program with two of the 20 finalists for the third-annual Rice Award.

Eastern Washington wide receiver Cooper Kupp (77 receptions for 1,378 yards and 18 touchdowns) received 80 first-place votes and 557 total points in the balloting to out-distance Cox, who received 16 first-place votes, 26 second-place nods and 259 total points. Critcher received one first-place nod and 17 total points from a national voting panel of FCS media and sports information directors.

Cox set Appalachian State freshman records and led the Southern Conference with 1,250 rushing yards, 1,809 yards from scrimmage and 21 total touchdowns in his first collegiate campaign. He also tied a school record with 15 rushing touchdowns and set a new conference record by being named the SoCon Freshman of the Week six times. He was the consensus SoCon Freshman of the Year and a first-team all-conference honoree.

Critcher averaged 45.9 yards per punt, good for the second nationally among FCS punters and tops among FCS freshmen in 2013. The 45.9-yard average also ranks third in Appalachian State history and fourth in the SoCon's all-time annals and shattered the school and conference freshman records.

Being runner-up for the Rice Award capped a big day for Cox, who was named to 247Sports' true-freshman all-America team earlier on Monday. Cox, who earned second-team recognition as an all-purpose back, was the only FCS representative and one of just three players from a non-Bowl Championship Series conference to earn true-freshman all-America recognition from 247Sports.

Photo Courtesy: Marcus Cox, ASU Athletics