

Bearcats Claw Bears In National Finals

Written by Staff Reports

Saturday, 21 December 2013 19:58

One of the greatest seasons in school history came to an end for Lenoir-Rhyne in a 43-28 setback to Northwest Missouri State Saturday in the 2013 NCAA Division II Football Championship at Braly Municipal

Stadium.

The Bears (13-2), ranked No. 13 in NCAA Division II and riding a 13-game winning streak, fell behind by a 17-0 score in the first quarter and never recovered.

The second-ranked Bearcats won their fourth national championship in school history (1998, 1999 and 2009 were the other years) and ended the year with a perfect 15-0 mark.

The Bearcats' Trevor Adams (Odessa, Texas) passed for 277 yards and three touchdowns while Reuben Thomas (Pasadena, Calif.) caught two scores in the first-ever meeting between the two schools.

Bearcats Claw Bears In National Finals

Written by Staff Reports

Saturday, 21 December 2013 19:58

Lenoir-Rhyne cut the first quarter deficit to 17-7 on a three-yard touchdown run by junior fullback Chris Robinson (Newnan, Ga.) with 1:16 remaining in the opening period but the Bears couldn't get any closer the rest of the way.

Thomas' 30-yard touchdown reception from Adams increased the Bearcats' lead to 29-7 midway through the third quarter and Northwest Missouri State was able to match touchdowns with Lenoir-Rhyne the rest of the way.

L-R sophomore wide receiver Greyson Wells (West Jefferson, N.C.) caught touchdown passes of 59 and 34 yards, respectively, in the setback. He finished with 93 receiving yards and two touchdowns.

Lenoir-Rhyne senior quarterback Josh Justice (Belmont, N.C.) added a touchdown passing and rushing and junior halfback Jarrod Spears (Bunnlevel, N.C.) led all rushers with 108 yards but the Bears lost two fumbles which led to scores by Northwest Missouri State.

On defense, Northwest Missouri State's D.J. Gnader (Council Bluffs, Iowa) led all tacklers with 12 while L-R senior defensive back O'neil Blake (Kissimmee, Fla.) tallied a game-high 11 takedowns and junior defensive lineman Blake Baker (Bethlehem, N.C.) finished with two quarterback sacks but the Bearcats ran 412 yards of total offense in the win.

Bearcats Claw Bears In National Finals

Written by Staff Reports

Saturday, 21 December 2013 19:58

Lenoir-Rhyne ran for 273 yards and finished the season as NCAA's all-time leader in rushing yards in a single season with 5,563. L-R also set a school record for wins in a single season (13) and is now 1-3 in all-time in national championship games. Lenoir-Rhyne won the NAIA National Championship in 1960 and went to the finals in both 1959 and 1962.

The NCAA has also announced that the Division II national championship game will move to Kansas City, MO., beginning next year.

Photo Courtesy: Greyson Wells, L-R Athletics