



A-State bounces back with blowout win over West Georgia

SCORES from Last Week

Volleyball



Sept. 11
@ Mizzou
L, 1-3
Set 1: 25-15 W
Set 2: 21-25 L
Set 3: 23-25 L
Set 4: 24-26 L



Sept. 12
Vs. Wichita State
W, 3-1
Set 1: 25-19 W
Set 2: 24-26 L
Set 3: 25-18 W
Set 4: 25-22 W



Sept. 12
Vs. Florida Gulf Coast University
L, 0-3
Set 1: 21-25 L
Set 2: 25-27 L
Set 3: 20-25 L

Women's Soccer



Sept. 13
@ Georgia Southern
L, 0-3



PHOTO COURTESY OF A-STATE ATHLETICS

Quarterback Trey Owens signals a “Wolves Up” while celebrating with his teammates. In the win over West Georgia, Owens threw 135 passing yards with two touchdowns.

BENJAMIN MORRIS

SPECIAL TO THE HERALD

The Arkansas State Football team opened their season at home with a 52-7 blowout win, overwhelming the West Georgia Wolves in a clash of two packs.

The Wolves, coming off a devastating 47-0 loss against Kennesaw State, came in search of their first win of the season. However, the Red Wolves walked onto Allison Field highly favored for victory despite coming off their season-opener loss against Memphis, placing big expectations on the players and head coach Butch Jones.

The two packs began to circle in the first quarter with neither team making much headway, much less reaching the endzone. West Georgia held the ball on offense for nearly nine minutes within the first quarter but found little success. The Wolves rushed the ball down the field but found little success in passing.

However, their biggest enemy within this first quarter wasn't the Red Wolves but rather themselves. Repeated foul trouble pushed them back, turning a first and ten into a first and 22 during their first possession.

A-State found little success on their first drive after some failed running attempts from quarterback Trey Owens, making their opening possession a three-and-out blunder. However, unlike West Georgia, the Red Wolves worked into a rhythm

on their second possession, as they gained 30 yards with a combination of short passes and confident rushes. The quarter ended with the Red Wolves holding possession at their own 45-yard line.

During the second quarter, the A-State offense officially started its attack, sending wide receiver Chauncy Cobb into the endzone for the first touchdown of the night early in the quarter. The Red Wolves kept up this relentless assault throughout the second quarter as Owens completed a 30-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Jaylen Bonelli.

While the offense kept the Wolves on their toes, the A-State defense made its contributions onto the scoreboard from turnovers in the second quarter. Cornerback Noah Flores took advantage of a fumble forced by linebacker Robert Stevens III to make a 68-yard scoop-and-score defensive touchdown. Stevens' fumble and an interception later in the third quarter led to him receiving Sun Belt Conference Defensive Player of the Week honors.

As A-State's lead extended to 21-0, West Georgia found themselves at their own 40-yard line with just a little over a minute left in the first half. They struggled to move the ball forward on incomplete passes and more fouls, making it seem like A-State would be the lone scorer of the half.

However, a miracle came for the Wolves. In their most explosive play of the night, they

closed 37 yards with a touchdown pass from quarterback Colton Fitzgerald, picking up their lone score of the night.

Going into the second half, West Georgia's defense started strong and gained possession after a fumble by Trey Owens. This victory faded shortly as safety Five Hamilton intercepted a Wolves pass and scored a 91-yard pick-six to solidify A-State's dominance over the game.

After A-State's third takeaway of the game, West Georgia's offense started to falter under defensive pressure, which Jones said was a key reason to their success in the second half. “The defense changed the

momentum of the game,” Jones said. “When you force three consecutive turnovers, the offense did a great job of complementary football, scoring on all three of those turnovers.”

Even after such an overwhelming victory, Jones still says that there is a great need for improvement. “We have to get better in a hurry,” Jones said. “The level of competition picks up, having to go on the road and play a Big 12 opponent (with TCU), and then obviously defending conference champion (Kennesaw State) coming here.”

Seeing the defensive gaps during the first and early second half and correcting

them up is a major factor that played into A-State's victory.

Leading their offense was Owens, who showed a spectacular passing performance. Owens completed 13 of his 17 attempted passes, covering 135 yards in total. His passing, partnered with the offense's rushing performance of 271 yards, led to A-State averaging six and a half points per possession.

While the Red Wolves celebrate their first win of the season, they prepare to face Texas Christian University (TCU) on Sept. 19 as the underdogs of the match.



PHOTO COURTESY OF A-STATE ATHLETICS

Wide receiver Chauncy Cobb stiff arms a West Georgia defender. Cobb recorded a receiving touchdown along with 54 yards.

Sports



NFL week one woes: Herald editors react to performances

The Denver Broncos: From first to worst



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
Cornerback Patrick Surtain II attempts to stop a rush from Kansas City Chiefs running back Kenneth Walker III. Walker torched the Broncos defense with 173 rushing yards and a rushing touchdown.

ALLIE CARSON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Before the first Monday Night Football game of the season, I truly believed the Denver Bronco Bo Nix was the most underrated quarterback from the 2024 draft class. I especially thought so after watching the other week one games, namely the one with Drake “The Schedule” Maye. But throwing an interception on the third play of the game? Not a great look for the first place

American Football Conference (AFC) team last season. “We let ourselves down and we shot ourselves in the foot. Literally gave ourselves no chance to succeed today. And made it easier for them. Point blank period,” Nix said. Starting the season against Patrick Mahomes who supposedly suffered an ACL tear last season and a team who went 6-11 the season prior, the Broncos should have won this game. And that’s probably the reason they didn’t. Behind the “Best O-Line in Football,” Nix had four costly sacks, tying his career high single game total. Wide receivers Courtland Sutton and Jaylen Waddle just didn’t show up tonight. Sutton was two for five targets, averaging 5.5 yards per catch tonight. The intercepted throw on the first drive was intended for Sutton. Waddle was only targeted by Nix twice, catching

one for a measly two yards. Tight end Evan Engram, wide receiver Pat Bryant and running back RJ Harvey were the only offensive players to play real football tonight for Denver. For one of the best defenses in the NFL, they sure let Chiefs running back Kenneth Walker slide out of every “tackle” the Broncos threw their way and he ended up rushing 173 yards, including a 60 yarder. How the Seattle Seahawks let him go is a real mystery.

Speaking of tackles, the defense hardly knew what that was tonight. It looked like they were still in training camp mode, playing some junior high flag football against Patrick “Kermit the Frog” Mahomes and the Chiefs. As Arkansas State University football coach

Butch Jones would say: The Broncos did not play complementary football. After Kermit’s pass intended for Xavier Worthy was intercepted by Broncos’ Brandon Jones, the Broncos offense started on the Chiefs’ 3-yard line. The offense wasn’t able to run three yards though and was instead given an offensive holding penalty against Pat Bryant. Where was that penalty against NFL golden boy Travis Kelce during the Chiefs’ first touchdown? Broncos got pushed to the Kansas City 15, Bo got sacked and fumbled the ball. Thankfully, the Chiefs didn’t recover the football and Denver had to settle for a field goal.

Nix was understandably disappointed with how the game was played. During the post-game press conference, a reporter asked Nix what good comes out of a bad game. “I think you learn how important it is to not kill yourself,” Nix said. “I think that goes without saying but when you do that in a game like today, it just raises that a little higher.” This season, however, the Broncos pitifully lost 31-10 in Arrowhead Stadium in front of Tom Cruise and, you guessed it, Taylor Swift. I want to have hope in this Broncos team. I’ve watched them for years and love Bo Nix. I know how this team is: They start the season slow but they manage to pull it off in the end. And I hope that’s still the case. I mean, they lost against the Indianapolis Colts last season (albeit because of a stupid leverage call), almost lost to the horrible Tennessee Titans and had a fourth quarter comeback against the Giants at home. They beat the Bills in the AFC Divisional Round of the playoffs last season, beat the Houston Texans, swept the Chiefs last season and beat the reigning Super Bowl Champions, the Philadelphia Eagles. Head coach Sean Payton needs to get his and Denver’s shit together before their next game which, of course, is against one of the only three teams Nix and the Broncos lost against in their 14-3: the Jacksonville Jaguars.

ERIC FLUKE
SPORTS EDITOR

So much for Indiana sports being the blueprint for success. Since writing my first column over the Hoosier state’s wide range of victories in athletics, a lot has gone down. While Coach Cig and the Indiana Hoosiers made the impossible happen with a college football national championship, all of the other teams flopped hard. The Indiana Pacers fell to the bottom of the NBA in a gap year without star point guard Tyrese Haliburton, putting up their worst record in franchise history. The Purdue Boilermakers battled in March with their trio of seniors but fell in the Elite Eight, marking the end of a chapter in their history with extreme uncertainty lying ahead. The drama and controversy of Sophie Cunningham along with Caitlin Clark’s struggle with other WNBA stars overshadowed the Indiana Fever’s outstanding offense.

However, my biggest fumble came with the Indianapolis Colts. After the team’s stellar offense skyrocketed them to the top of the AFC for the first half of the 2025 season, injuries and a lack of adaptability from the coaching staff saw the Colts plummet in the standings. I don’t know how it’s possible to go 8-2 and still miss the playoffs in the end, but the front office in Indy made it happen. Owner Carlie Isray-Gordon apparently sees something the rest of us fans and analysts don’t because she chose to run it back with nearly the exact same roster, minus a few key subtractions and draft pickups. This season, I hoped that her faith in this team would prove me wrong. But this first game against the Baltimore

Ravens showed that unless head coach Shane Steichen and general manager Chris Ballard can adjust, this sinking ship spells their final year in Indy. Pumping most of their offseason salary into quarterback Daniel Jones and wide receiver Alec Pierce seemed meaningless as the offense crumbled in the face of constant pressure off of blitz formations from the Ravens’ first-time head coach Jesse Minter and tight coverage from their secondary. If not for running back Jonathan Taylor, the offense would have completely stagnated, but even then, Baltimore’s defensive line anchored by newly acquired defensive end Trey Hendrickson eventually took its toll on last season’s rushing touchdown king.



Meanwhile, defensive coordinator Lou Anarumo learned nothing from his experimentation with his lineups during his first season with the Colts. The huge holes in his plans allowed Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson to throw the fourth-most passing yards in a game in his career and running back Derrick Henry to trounce the defensive

line for 144 rushing yards. Maybe putting your secondary rookie on the opposing WR1 wasn’t the smartest idea when you have veterans such as cornerbacks Sauce Gardner and Chardavious Ward Sr. at your disposal. The defensive line showed up at least with third-year defensive end Laiatu Latu and veteran defensive tackle DeForest Buckner applying pressure on Jackson, even forcing a fumble on the flaming hot quarterback. When it came to special teams, cutting my favorite kicker and Arkansas State’s field goal king Blake Grupe may turn out for the worst. To kick off his season, Spencer Schrader missed an extra point on the first touchdown but made up for it with a 58-yard field goal. Hopefully, the PAT miss will be just a fluke, but it acts as a bad omen for his performance.

The kick return team showed up though with rookie running back Seth McGowan making an impact with 164 yards on five attempts. Hopefully, we’ll find a way to utilize him on offense as well behind Taylor. While I don’t want to overreact to one game, this pathetic outing in front of the home crowd dashes hope for this team early. There are glimpses of potential from this team such as the success on the Colts’ first possession and the defensive line’s pressure on Jackson. However, a hell of a lot more mistakes need fixing before Indy even sniffs their first playoff appearance since grandpa quarterback Phillip Rivers led us to the holy land in 2020. Whether the Colts make the postseason or take a vacation to Cancun will decide the trajectory of this franchise, so Steichen and Ballard better work their asses off or pray to God for a miracle.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BALITMORE BANNER
Indianapolis Colts cornerback Sauce Gardner fails to stop Baltimore Ravens running back Derrick Henry from scoring a touchdown. Gardner was brought in last season to the Colts to bolster their defense at a hefty cost: two first-round draft picks and wide receiver Adonai Mitchell.