

“Unacceptable”

**WVU defense routed, Fall to Kansas 55-42 in overtime
Mountaineer offense scores 73 point in first 2 games, still 0-2
Kansas offense overwhelmed WVU's defense with 419 yards, 7 TDs**

Well Mountaineers the unthinkable happened. WVU was defeated at home by the Kansas Jayhawks. Not only were they defeated but the Mountaineer defense was completely overwhelmed by the Jayhawk offense allowing 419 yards and 7 touchdowns. After WVU jumped out to a 21-7 lead with 1:42 to go in the 1st quarter I was sitting in the far endzone thinking well this should be a comfortable victory and maybe we will even see backup quarterbacks Garrett Green and Nicol Markel.

However....The Jayhawks blitzed the Mountaineer defense outscoring them 28-7 taking a 35-28 lead with 3 minutes to go in the 3rd quarter and at that point I hate to admit that I felt we would lose the football game. Even though the WVU offense came to life a bit in the 4th quarter and the WVU defense actually got a stop that allowed the Mountaineers to tie the football game at 42-42 as time expired on a C.J. Donaldson 1 yard touchdown run and a nice two point conversion pass to Bryce Ford Wheaton I never believed WVU would find a way to win the game in overtime.

I just don't have any confidence in this WVU defense that has now surrendered 93 points while starting the season 0-2 in two very winnable football games. Even more startling is that one changed play in the Pittsburgh loss and one changed play in this Kansas loss and WVU could be 2-0 and looking at the season much differently.

In last weeks report I wrote about Neal Browns hiring and how he certainly seemed like the “Rising Star” amount the group of 5 coaches waiting for an opportunity to coach a Power 5 team having posted a 30-5 record his last three seasons at Troy University while winning 3 consecutive Bowl Games. Fast forward 3 seasons and 2 games and Neal Brown is a very disappointing 17-20 as the Head Coach of the West Virginia Mountaineers with his only winning season being 6-4 in the Covid year with a nice Liberty Bowl victory over Army. Take away the covid year and WVU is 11-16 under coach Brown.

Unfortunately, WVU appears to be stuck with coach Brown no matter what happens the rest of this season, and it could be a brutal 2/3 win season, in large part because WVU Athletic Director Shane Lyons saw fit to give Coach Brown and contract extension after the Covid shortened season and the Bowl win over Army. The contract extension included a \$20 million dollar buyout that drops to \$16 million next season. This is an absurd figure, especially at WVU.

While writing this report I saw a report that Nebraska fired Head Coach Scott Frost and paid him over \$15 million dollars to leave when had the waited just 18 days the buyout would have dropped to 7.5 million but the pulled the trigger anyway. Of course, a couple years ago LSU fired coach Ed Orgeron with \$17 million dollars left on his deal. Well, WVU aint LSU or even Nebraska. Throughout their storied football history WVU has never seen fit to buy out a football coach with years left on his deal. In the late 1970's when Frank Cignetti succeeded Bobby Bowden when he left for Florida State he suffered 4 consecutive losing season with talent that perhaps should have at least performed well enough to go to a bowl game in on or two of those season but WVU would not fire Cignetti and simply let his contract expire and hired Coach Don Nehlen away from Michigan.

Then we had Rich Rodriguez bolt for the head coaching position at Michigan they gave Bill Stewart the job and after 3 9-3 seasons then

athletic Director Oliver Luck brought in Dana Holgorsen as the offensive coordinator and the “Coach in waiting” allowing coach Stewart to coach the final year of his deal. Of course, Stewart would ultimately resign and Dana became coach immediately for that last season in the Big East before moving to the Big 12.

West Virginia University has never had the guts to fire a coach and pay him a ton of money to not coach the team, instead they have just bit the bullet and waited for the coach’s contract to run out and then bring in their new coach. So having said all that I doubt Shane Lyons will act any differently than any of the previous Mountaineer Athletic directors. If he was going to make a move, we would most likely have already seen a “GO FUND ME” sight set up to raise the buyout money because WVU will claim they simply cannot afford to pay an exuberant buyout.

Now that I have over reacted and ranted let’s look at the positive. There is no guarantee that WVU will not finish at least 6-6 and qualify for a bowl game. They played pretty well against ta very solid Pitt Panther football team and but for what believe to be a couple of poor coaching decisions and a bad bounce they should have won that game. Then we have the Kansas game that despite all the poor play on defense they forced overtime in the end and had Kansas stopped in the 1st overtime if not for a “Brain Dead” decision by Taijh Alston put a late hit on Kansas quarterback Jaylon Daniels continued to drive and ultimately a Jayhawks touchdown.

As angry as anyone of us in Mountaineer Nation maybe with coach Brown and this team I don’t believe ANY of us feel they will lose at home this Saturday against the Towson Tigers at 1:00 pm at Mountaineer Field. So we are looking at a 1-2 team heading into another rivalry border battle with the Virginia Tech Hokies in Blacksburg on a Thursday night at 7:00 pm on ESPN.

A friend of mine named Brad Robinson sent me a text earlier today claiming the entire season and perhaps coach Browns future as the

Mountaineer Head Coach really rests on this Thursday Night Prime Time Matchup with Virginia Tech. WVU comes up big and wins this rivalry matchup they are 2-2 heading into Big 12 play with an October 1st date at Texas. A victory over Va Tech in Blacksburg would tell us a lot about the make up of this team and if we can expect more or do we just resign ourselves to a losing season and see what happens with the coaching situation.

The Mountaineers do have a very young coach on Staff in offensive coordinator Graham Harrell who had been the offensive coordinator at USC under Clay Helton. He would certainly be an in house candidate if a coaching move was ultimately made.
