

HISTORY OF PSU FOOTBALL

Pittsburg State University has built a tradition as one of the finest small-college football programs in the nation. Two NAIA national championships and an NCAA Division II national title highlight an illustrious gridiron history that dates back to the early 1900s.

After competing for 81 years as an NAIA program, PSU joined the NCAA Division II ranks and the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association in 1989. The Gorillas have captured the MIAA football championship in nine of 15 seasons, after winning four straight championships in the NAIA's Central States Intercollegiate Conference, from 1985-88.

Pittsburg State has qualified for the national playoffs in 17 of the last 19 years, including an NCAA Division II record nine straight post-season appearances from 1989-97.

PSU reached the Division II National Championship game three times in the 1990s. The Gorillas captured the 1991 National Championship and finished as the national runner-up in '92. PSU won a school-record 25 straight games during that two-season span. The Gorillas finished the '95 season as the national runner-up.

The Winningest All-Time NCAA Division II Program

Pittsburg State became the winningest NCAA Division II football program in 1995.

PSU passed Hillsdale College, Mich., at the top of the all-time victories list in the 1995 season on its march to the national runner-up finish. The Gorillas, in 96 seasons of intercollegiate competition, have accumulated 579 victories – posting a 579-301-48 overall mark. North Dakota State University is currently second with 552 victories.

All-Time Winningest NCAA Division II Teams

| (Includes contests as NAIA members) | Wins |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. PITTSBURG STATE | 579 |
| 2. North Dakota State | 552 |
| 3. Central Oklahoma | 548 |
| 3. Tuskegee, Ala. | 548 |
| 5. Hillsdale, Mich. | 536 |



Linebacker Kris Mengarelli helped the Pittsburg State Gorillas secure the 1991 NCAA Division II National Championship against Jacksonville State when he forced Gamecock QB Nickey Edmondson from the game on this play mid-way through the third quarter.



Running back Gary Shadon follows a block by tight end Tom Gosch (#51) and guard Eddie Carter (#72) to score the eventual game-winning touchdown in the fourth quarter of the 1961 Camellia Bowl.

Pittsburg State has recorded only 21 losing seasons during its 95-year history and the Gorillas have notched 25 straight winning seasons since 1978. PSU has won a total of 27 league titles, including 14 championships in the last 23 years.

Pittsburg State's Conference Affiliation Chronology

Pittsburg State joined the Kansas Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (KIAC) in 1911 and won its first conference championship in 1924 under Dr. Garfield W. Weede. The Gorillas compiled a 7-0-1 record that year, recording the school's first undefeated season.

The Gorillas became members of the Central Intercollegiate Conference (CIC) in 1928. The Gorillas won nine league championships in 41 years in the league, six of which came between 1949-66 under Carnie Smith. As the winningest coach in PSU history (until 2001 when he was passed by Chuck Broyles), Smith guided the Gorillas to 116 wins, 52 losses and six ties in his 18 seasons as the school's head coach.

Under Smith, Pittsburg State won two NAIA national championships, achieving perfect 11-0-0 seasons in 1957 and 1961 to win the national championship.

In 1969, Pittsburg State joined the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference. The Gorillas competed in the conference for three seasons, winning the RMAC title in 1970.

Pittsburg State then competed in the Great Plains Athletic Conference from 1972-75 before joining the Central States Intercollegiate Conference (CSIC) in 1976. PSU won or shared the CSIC championship in seven of 13 years in the league.

From 1980-88, Pittsburg State won six CSIC championships, appeared in the NAIA national playoffs five times and produced 34 NAIA All-Americans.

In 1989, Pittsburg State joined the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association and the NCAA Division II ranks.

Since then, the Gorillas have won the MIAA title eight times and have qualified for the 16-team Division II playoff field in 13 of the 15 seasons. The Gorillas won the NCAA-II national title in '91 and finished as the national runner-up in '92 and '95. PSU has posted a 120-15-1 record against MIAA opponents since joining the conference.

HISTORY OF PSU FOOTBALL

Gorillas in Post-Season Play

Pittsburg State has qualified for the national playoffs in 17 of the last 19 years, including a record nine consecutive berths in the NCAA-II post-season championships from 1989-97.

The Gorillas have advanced to post-season play 23 times in the 96-year history of the football program, highlighted by 20 appearances in national playoff competition.

In 1957, the Gorillas captured the first of two NAIA National Championships under head coach Carnie Smith, completing a perfect 11-0 campaign with a 27-26 victory over Hillsdale College, Mich., in the Holiday Bowl at St. Petersburg, Fla. In 1961, the Gorillas again went 11-0 – this time winning the NAIA title with a 12-7 victory against Linfield College, Ore., in the Camellia Bowl at Sacramento, Calif.

In 1981, the Gorillas returned to the NAIA National Championship game under head coach Ron Randleman but came up short as PSU fell to Elon, 3-0, on a frozen field at Burlington, N.C.

In 1985, under first-year head coach Dennis Franchione, the Gorillas qualified for the NAIA playoffs once again but lost a first-round contest. Pittsburg State reached the semifinals the next three seasons, but each year the Gorillas' quest for a national crown ended in bitter defeat.

In 1989, PSU made the transition from the NAIA to the NCAA Division II ranks and won its first NCAA-II playoff game, a 28-7 victory over MIAA rival Northwest Missouri, before falling to Angelo State, Texas, in the quarterfinals.

PSU returned to the NCAA playoffs in 1990 under head coach Chuck Broyles, reaching the national semifinals before falling, 39-29, to eventual national champion North Dakota State.

Finally in 1991, PSU won its first national championship in 30 years and its first title as a member of NCAA Division II with a 23-6 victory over Jacksonville State, Ala., at Florence, Ala.

In 1992, PSU came inches short of a repeat championship, after reaching the title game by virtue of a pair of thrilling wins against North Dakota State (38-37 in OT) and Portland State (41-38). In the title game, the Gorillas saw a late drive against the same JSU team they beat in '91 come up short, and the Gamecocks escaped with a 17-13 win at Florence. The loss ended PSU's school record 25-game winning streak.

In 1993 and 1994, PSU qualified for the Division II playoffs, but suffered first-round defeats. In '93, the Gorillas dropped a 17-14 decision at North Dakota, and in '94, PSU lost an 18-12 triple overtime contest to North Dakota State on a rain-soaked Brandenburg Field.

In 1995, PSU again reached the NCAA-II National Championship game. The Gorillas took a 12-0-1 record into the title game, before falling, 27-7, to North Alabama.

In 1996, '97 and '99, PSU suffered close first-round defeats to Northern Colorado. In 2000, PSU lost a first-round game against Nebraska-Omaha. In 2001, PSU defeated UNO in the first round before losing to eventual national champion North Dakota in the national quarterfinals. Last year, UND defeated PSU in the first round en route to a national runner-up finish.

Pittsburg State's All-Time Playoff Record

Pittsburg State compiled a 9-5 record in seven NAIA playoff appearances, and the Gorillas have a 14-12 mark in the NCAA Division II playoffs, for a combined 23-17 mark.

PSU is 17-6 at home in the playoffs, 3-10 on the road and 3-1 in games played at neutral sites. All three neutral site victories were in national championship games ('57, '61, '91.)

Pittsburg State has played in three additional post-season bowl games: the 1950 Mirza Temple Shrine Bowl, the '79 Boot Hill Bowl and the '80 Moila Shrine Bowl.

PSU in the National Playoffs

1957 NAIA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Defeated Hillsdale, Mich., 27-26
(Holiday Bowl - St. Petersburg, Fla.)

1961 NAIA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Defeated Northern State, S.D., 28-14, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Linfield, Ore., 12-7
(Camellia Bowl - Sacramento, Calif.)

1981 NAIA NATIONAL RUNNER-UP

Defeated Minnesota State-Moorhead., 14-13, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Lost to Elon, N.C., 3-0, at Burlington, N.C.

1985 NAIA DIVISION I QUARTERFINALIST

Lost to Central Arkansas, 32-22, at Pittsburg, Kan.

1986 NAIA DIVISION I SEMIFINALIST

Defeated Washburn, 58-24, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Lost to Cameron, Okla., 17-6, at Lawton, Okla.

1987 NAIA DIVISION I SEMIFINALIST

Defeated Northeastern State, 57-0, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Presbyterian, S.C., 42-21, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Lost to Cameron, Okla., 20-10, at Pittsburg, Kan.

1988 NAIA DIVISION I SEMIFINALIST

Defeated Northern State, S.D., 38-14, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Arkansas-Monticello, 23-7, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Lost to Adams State, Colo., 13-10, at Alamosa, Colo.

1989 NCAA DIVISION II QUARTERFINALIST

Defeated Northwest Missouri, 28-7, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Lost to Angelo State, Texas, 24-21, at Pittsburg, Kan.

1990 NCAA DIVISION II SEMIFINALIST

Defeated Truman State, 59-3, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Texas A&M-Commerce, 60-28, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Lost to North Dakota State, 39-29, at Fargo, N.D.

1991 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Defeated Butler, Ind., 26-16, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Texas A&M-Commerce, 38-28, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Portland State, 53-21, at Portland, Ore.
Defeated Jacksonville State, 23-6, at Florence, Ala.

1992 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL RUNNER-UP

Defeated North Dakota, 26-21, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated North Dakota State, 38-37 (OT), at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Portland State, 41-38, at Portland, Ore.
Lost to Jacksonville State, 17-13, at Florence, Ala.

1993 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUALIFIER

Lost to North Dakota, 17-14, at Grand Forks, N.D.

1994 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUALIFIER

Lost to North Dakota State, 18-12 (3 OT), at Pittsburg, Kan.

1995 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL RUNNER-UP

Defeated Northern Colorado, 36-17, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated North Dakota State, 9-7, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Defeated Texas A&M-Kingsville, 28-25 (OT), at Kingsville, Texas
Lost to North Alabama, 27-7, at Florence, Ala.

1996 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUALIFIER

Lost to Northern Colorado, 24-21, at Pittsburg, Kan.

1997 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUALIFIER

Lost to Northern Colorado, 24-16, at Pittsburg, Kan.

1999 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUALIFIER

Lost to Northern Colorado, 34-31, at Greeley, Colo.

2000 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUALIFIER

Lost to Nebraska-Omaha, 14-3, at Omaha, Neb.

2001 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUARTERFINALIST

Defeated Nebraska-Omaha, 20-7, at Pittsburg, Kan.
Lost to North Dakota, 38-0, at Grand Forks, N.D.

2003 NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL QUALIFIER

Lost to North Dakota, 24-14, at Grand Forks, N.D.