

WEEK EIGHT  
UL MONROE at APPALACHIAN ST

**Thomas, No. 24 Appalachian State roll past La.-Monroe 52-7**

BOONE, N.C. -- Appalachian State coach Eli Drinkwitz has a daily reminder for his football team: Do it better than it has ever been done before.

The Mountaineers are working on that. Zac Thomas threw for 214 yards and three touchdowns and ran for another score and No. 24 Appalachian State beat Louisiana-Monroe 52-7 on Saturday for the Mountaineers' first victory as a Top 25 team.

The win helped bury the memory of getting blown out by Georgia Southern 34-14 last year just five days after breaking into the AP poll at No. 25, as well as avenge a heart-breaking 52-45 loss to Louisiana-Monroe in the last meeting in 2017.

Drinkwitz said he made his players "well aware" of both losses after posting motivational material all over the team's building, including on the players' lockers.

"We were motivated to write our own history and to always compete and do it better than it has ever done before," said Drinkwitz, who remained unbeaten in his first year as Mountaineers coach.

With the win Appalachian State will become the first Sun Belt conference team ever to be ranked in consecutive weeks.

Darrynton Evans added 177 yards from scrimmage and two touchdowns to help Appalachian State extend the nation's third-longest winning streak to 12 games. Only Clemson (22) and Ohio State (13) have longer active streaks.

Appalachian State (6-0, 3-0 Sun Belt) entered the game as one of 12 unbeaten FBS teams in the country, and rattled off 31 straight points in the first half after spotting the Warhawks a 7-0 lead.

Evans got the Mountaineers going on a rain-soaked afternoon by breaking through big hole at the line of scrimmage and racing 59 yards for a touchdown to tie it at 7. Thomas connected on a 6-yard TD pass to Thomas Hennigan in the back of the end zone and scored on a sneak following a Josh Thomas' fumble recovery to make it 21-7 late in the first quarter.

Thomas did it all for the Mountaineers.

On one late first half possession he eluded two defenders and zig-zagged his way up the field for a 32-yard gain, juking defenders along the way. Then he found Collin Reed in the back of the end zone for a touchdown on a perfectly executed play-action fake.

"It's an accomplishment to be ranked, but you saw last year we got embarrassed by Georgia Southern," Thomas said. "So it's good to get this win under us and still be ranked. I think it shows that we can put stuff behind us. All week long we preached not to let the news get too big for your head."

The Mountaineers limited Louisiana-Monroe's Caleb Evans to 75 yards passing and had two interceptions.

Louisiana-Monroe (3-4, 2-1) was outgained 572-213.

"We got outplayed in every phase of the game," said Warhawks coach Matt Viator. "I'm really disappointed because I really expected us to play better."

**POLL IMPLICATIONS**

The Mountaineers came in as the highest-ranked Sun Belt Conference team in history and did nothing to hurt their ranking, beating a ULM team that was the only other unbeaten team in conference play.

**GETTING DOWN**

Thomas has been an effective runner for the Mountaineers all season and had 59 yards on six carries and a touchdown against ULM. He also wisely slid to avoid contact on a number of occasions, which has kept him from taking big hits.

"Last I took a lot of dumb hits and I put myself out of the game against Georgia Southern," Thomas said. "Just watching how I played last year and taking the hits that I was taking that were unnecessary. I'm less sore."

**AWAY FROM NO. 5**

Drinkwitz said the Mountaineers goal was to run to the opposite side of Louisiana-Monroe defensive end Kerry Starks, who he considers a big-time player and difference maker on defense.

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Louisiana-Monroe: The Warhawks took Florida State to overtime earlier this year, but struggled to get anything going on offense after marching 82 yards on 12 plays for a touchdown on the game's opening drive. Following that drive, they had just 89 yards and no points for the remainder of the first half.

Appalachian State: The Mountaineers offensive prowess has never been in doubt, but now the defense is looking strong, too. This marks the second straight week they've held an opponent to seven points. Last week they beat Louisiana-Lafayette 17-7, holding the Ragin Cajuns to 34 points below their season average. "We stopped the run," Drinkwitz said after the initial touchdown drive. "We were getting bled down the field in the run game, and our D-line wasn't very physical, nor our linebackers. Those guys just settled down and got used to the game speed."

|              |          |          |          |          |          |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Final</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>T</b> |
| ULM          | 7        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 7        |
| APP          | 21       | 10       | 7        | 14       | 52       |

**Scoring Summary -----**

|   | ULM | APP |
|---|-----|-----|
| <b>FIRST QUARTER</b>  |     |     |
| ULM TD 11:09 Kayin White 1 Yd Run (Jared Porter Kick)                         | 7   | 0   |
| 12 plays, 82 yards, 3:51  |     |     |
| APP TD 10:28 Darrynton Evans 59 Yd Run (Chandler Staton Kick)                 | 7   | 7   |
| 3 plays, 75 yards, 0:41   |     |     |
| APP TD 4:46 Thomas Hennigan 6 Yd pass from Zac Thomas (Chandler Staton Kick)  | 7   | 14  |
| 12 plays, 76 yards, 3:57  |     |     |
| APP TD 1:19 Zac Thomas 1 Yd Run (Chandler Staton Kick)                        | 7   | 21  |
| 5 plays, 24 yards, 1:51   |     |     |
| <b>SECOND QUARTER</b>   |     |     |
| APP FG 11:14 Chandler Staton 27 Yd Field Goal                                 | 7   | 24  |
| 10 plays, 75 yards, 3:46  |     |     |
| APP TD 1:19 Collin Reed 1 Yd pass from Zac Thomas (Chandler Staton Kick)      | 7   | 31  |
| 8 plays, 64 yards, 2:21   |     |     |
| <b>THIRD QUARTER</b>  |     |     |
| APP TD 9:06 Darrynton Evans 15 Yd pass from Zac Thomas (Chandler Staton Kick) | 7   | 38  |
| 12 plays, 75 yards, 5:54  |     |     |
| <b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>   |     |     |
| APP TD 12:21 Marcus Williams Jr. 1 Yd Run (Chandler Staton Kick)              | 7   | 45  |
| 8 plays, 31 yards, 3:49   |     |     |
| APP TD 6:56 Jalen Virgil 56 Yd pass from Jacob Huesman (Chandler Staton Kick) | 7   | 52  |
| 2 plays, 58 yards, 0:45   |     |     |

| Team Stats             | ULM   | APP   |
|------------------------|-------|-------|
| First Downs            | 9     | 27    |
| Passes for First       | 4     | 12    |
| Rushes for First       | 4     | 14    |
| Penalties for First    | 1     | 1     |
| Third Down Efficiency  | 2-13  | 13-18 |
| Fourth Down Efficiency | 0-0   | 0-0   |
| Total Yards            | 213   | 572   |
| Total Plays            | 56    | 84    |
| Avg Gain Per Play      | 3.8   | 6.8   |
| Net Yards Rushing      | 111   | 302   |
| Rushes                 | 29    | 52    |
| Yards Per Rush         | 3.8   | 5.8   |
| Net Yards Passing      | 102   | 270   |
| Comp-Att               | 11-27 | 19-32 |
| Yards Per Pass         | 3.8   | 8.4   |
| Times Sacked           | 1     | 0     |
| Yds Lost To Sacks      | -4    | 0     |
| Interceptions          | 2     | 1     |
| Punts                  | 10    | 4     |
| Punt Average           | 43.8  | 48.3  |
| Penalties              | 9     | 5     |
| Penalty Yards          | 66    | 34    |
| Fumbles                | 1     | 3     |
| Fumbles Lost           | 1     | 1     |
| Time of Poss           | 24:48 | 35:12 |

**Individual Stats**

**RUSHING**

| UL MONROE             | Rush | Yds | Avg | TD | LONG |
|-----------------------|------|-----|-----|----|------|
| Josh Johnson          | 13   | 77  | 5.9 | 0  | 18   |
| Caleb Evans           | 5    | 22  | 4.4 | 0  | 10   |
| Austin Vaughn         | 2    | 4   | 2.0 | 0  | 3    |
| Jakyle Holmes         | 5    | 4   | 0.8 | 0  | 2    |
| Colby Suits           | 3    | 3   | 1.0 | 0  | 7    |
| Kayin White           | 1    | 1   | 1.0 | 1  | 1    |
| <b>APPALACHIAN ST</b> |      |     |     |    |      |
|                       | Rush | Yds | Avg | TD | LONG |
| Darrynton Evans       | 17   | 136 | 8.0 | 1  | 59   |
| Marcus Williams Jr.   | 16   | 79  | 4.9 | 1  | 17   |
| Zac Thomas            | 6    | 58  | 9.7 | 1  | 32   |
| Nakendrick Clark      | 5    | 13  | 2.6 | 0  | 6    |
| Gabe Montgomery       | 3    | 9   | 3.0 | 0  | 5    |
| Raykwon Anderson      | 3    | 6   | 2.0 | 0  | 4    |
| Jacob Huesman         | 1    | 1   | 1.0 | 0  | 0    |
| Malik Williams        | 1    | 0   | 0.0 | 0  | 0    |

**PASSING**

| UL MONROE             | Comp | Att | Yds | Y/A  | TD | Int | QBRat |
|-----------------------|------|-----|-----|------|----|-----|-------|
| Caleb Evans           | 9    | 19  | 75  | 3.9  | 0  | 1   | 21.7  |
| Colby Suits           | 2    | 8   | 27  | 3.4  | 0  | 1   | 1.1   |
| <b>APPALACHIAN ST</b> |      |     |     |      |    |     |       |
|                       | Comp | Att | Yds | Y/A  | TD | Int | QBRat |
| Zac Thomas            | 18   | 30  | 214 | 7.1  | 3  | 1   | 94.2  |
| Jacob Huesman         | 1    | 2   | 56  | 28.0 | 1  | 0   | 92.3  |

**RECEIVING**

| UL MONROE             | Rec | Yds | Avg  | TD | LONG |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|------|----|------|
| Zach Jackson          | 2   | 33  | 16.5 | 0  | 29   |
| Markis McCray         | 2   | 29  | 14.5 | 0  | 29   |
| Kayin White           | 1   | 15  | 15.0 | 0  | 15   |
| Tyler Lamm            | 1   | 11  | 11.0 | 0  | 11   |
| Perry Carter Jr.      | 1   | 6   | 6.0  | 0  | 6    |
| Josh Pederson         | 2   | 6   | 3.0  | 0  | 4    |
| Malik Jackson         | 2   | 2   | 1.0  | 0  | 4    |
| <b>APPALACHIAN ST</b> |     |     |      |    |      |
|                       | Rec | Yds | Avg  | TD | LONG |
| Corey Xavier Sutton   | 5   | 75  | 15.0 | 0  | 54   |
| Jalen Virgil          | 1   | 56  | 56.0 | 1  | 56   |
| Darrynton Evans       | 3   | 41  | 13.7 | 1  | 18   |
| Malik Williams        | 3   | 35  | 11.7 | 0  | 14   |
| Henry Pearson         | 2   | 30  | 15.0 | 0  | 16   |
| Keishawn Watson       | 1   | 14  | 14.0 | 0  | 14   |
| Thomas Hennigan       | 2   | 11  | 5.5  | 1  | 6    |
| Marcus Williams Jr.   | 1   | 7   | 7.0  | 0  | 7    |
| Collin Reed           | 1   | 1   | 1.0  | 1  | 1    |