

Phoenix looks to burn the Flames

Similar teams will face off this weekend as Elon hosts Liberty University

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Sports Editor

The Phoenix [1-1] faces its first Division I-AA test this week when it takes on the Liberty University Flames [2-1] on Saturday at Rhodes Stadium.

While the Phoenix was idle last weekend, Liberty lost in a double overtime thriller against the College of William and Mary 48-41. In last week's poll, both teams were outside the top 25 but received votes.

Like Elon, Liberty's team is in the middle of a rebuilding stage. Two years ago, the Flames were 1-10. Last year under new head coach Danny Rocco, the Flames improved to 6-5, which was the biggest turn around of all Division I-AA teams.

"This is a huge test for our team," Phoenix head coach Pete Lembo said. "They are a program that commits tremendous resources to football, are very physical and have outstanding skill players."

The Phoenix defense will have its hands full with the balanced offense of the Flames. Led by quarterback Brock Smith and running back Zach Terrell, the Flames have scored 35 or more points in each of the team's games.

On the other side of the ball, the Phoenix could be without starting running back T.J. Clegg who is questionable after he injured his knee on the first drive of the Phoenix's win against West Virginia Wesleyan. However, Lembo is not too worried if Clegg is unable to play Saturday because of red shirt freshman Brandon Newsome's solid performance off the bench.

"The trademark of championship programs is depth, and we have lots of depth at tail back," Lembo said. "The players have a lot of confidence in Brandon and he's improved dramatically since this summer."

Newsome ended the West Virginia Wesleyan game with 74 rushing yards and one touchdown, his first as a college running back.



Brian Beegle/ Photographer

Brandon Newsome looks to help Elon attempt to climb above .500 against Liberty after significant minutes two weeks ago.

"I got chills all over," Newsome said. "It was the greatest feeling since my first high school touchdown. I hope it can every week or maybe a twice-a-week."

The Phoenix will also have a favorable match-up against the Flames' weak pass defense. In three games, Liberty has yielded six touchdowns via the pass and is giving up an average of 215 yards through the air. That defense will be facing Phoenix quarterback Scott Riddle, who has thrown for five

touchdowns and is averaging 286 passing yards in his first two starts.

The Phoenix will need to cut down on its penalties though. Last season, Elon gave up 38 penalty yards-per-game. Through two games this season, it has committed 88 penalty yards-per-game and Lembo is not happy about it.

"There is no excuse for the penalties we're giving up," Lembo said. "We need to be more disciplined and make better decisions out there."

Lembo also made it clear to his team that it is not good enough to look ahead to the Appalachian State game in two weeks.

"Liberty will run us out of our own stadium if we're not focusing on them," Lembo said.

These two teams have played each other 10 times and Elon leads the series 7-3. The last time the Phoenix and the Flames played was in 2004, which Liberty won 27-17.

Sports Standings

Volleyball

Team	Conference		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
UNC-Greensboro	1	0	7	7
Western Carolina	1	0	5	10
Furman	0	0	6	3
Wofford	0	0	6	6
College of Charleston	0	0	5	5
Davidson	0	0	6	7
Elon	0	0	5	7
Chattanooga	0	0	4	6
Appalachian State	0	0	3	9
Georgia Southern	0	1	3	10
The Citadel	0	1	1	8

Women's soccer

Team	Conference			Overall		
	W	L	T	W	L	T
Appalachian State	0	0	0	3	0	2
Wofford	0	0	0	3	1	1
College of Charleston	0	0	0	3	2	0
UNC-Greensboro	0	0	0	3	2	1
Furman	0	0	0	4	3	0
Western Carolina	0	0	0	4	3	0
Elon	0	0	0	2	3	1
Davidson	0	0	0	2	3	0
The Citadel	0	0	0	1	5	0
Chattanooga	0	0	0	0	3	1
Georgia Southern	0	0	0	0	4	0

Football

Team	Conference		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
Appalachian State	0	0	3	0
Georgia Southern	0	0	2	0
The Citadel	0	0	2	1
Wofford	0	0	2	1
Elon	0	0	1	1
Furman	0	0	1	2
Chattanooga	0	0	0	2
Western Carolina	0	0	0	3

Men's soccer

Team	Conference			Overall		
	W	L	T	W	L	T
College of Charleston	0	0	0	6	0	0
Furman	0	0	0	6	0	0
Appalachian State	0	0	0	3	1	1
UNC-Greensboro	0	0	0	2	1	2
Elon	0	0	0	2	2	1
Wofford	0	0	0	2	2	1
Georgia Southern	0	0	0	2	4	0
Davidson	0	0	0	1	4	0