VIKING FOOTBALL COMES BACK TO BEAT PERU STATE SATURDAY

Marshall, Mo. (November 2, 2013)- The No. 12 Missouri Valley College football team came back with a late fourth quarter touchdown to knock off No. 9 Peru State College on the road Saturday afternoon 21-14. The game was played at Nebraska City (Neb.) High School due to renovations to Peru State’s Oak Bowl Stadium and was the Heart of America Athletic Conference and NAIA Game of the Week.

The Vikings quickly took control of the ball game on their first possession. After receiving the opening kickoff, the Vikings proceeded to march down the field on Peru State. Junior Running Back James Tillman (Kansas City, Mo.) had three gains of over 10-yards on the drive, and capped things off with a two yard touchdown run to give MVC a 7-0 lead just four minutes into the game. The Vikings went 90 yards in 10 plays on the scoring drive to grab the early lead.

Peru had only two possessions in the first quarter, both ended in punts, and the Vikings made their final first quarter possession count. After taking over with just minutes remaining in the quarter, Junior Quarterback Bruce Reyes (Beaumont, Texas) drove the Vikings down the field. The Vikings took over at their own seven yard line, but two pass completions to Junior Wide Receiver Jarrell Davis (Merced, Calif.) got the Viking offense moving. The first was a 15-yard completion to move the ball from deep inside Viking territory. The second completion was a 57-yard touchdown play that gave MVC a 13-0 lead with two minutes remaining in the first quarter, after the extra point was blocked.

Peru State responded to the Viking touchdown drive, with one of its own. After taking over at their own 43-yard line the Bobcats drove down the field on the Viking defense. Eventually Peru State capped off the 10-play 67-yard drive with a two-yard touchdown run, and after the extra point, Peru State cut into the Viking lead at 13-7 with just under 12-minutes remaining in the second quarter.
The next few possessions for both teams didn’t result in much on offense. The Vikings followed up the Peru State touchdown with a three-and-out, and despite the Vikings fumbling a Peru punt near midfield, the Bobcats were unable to get anything going. After Peru failed to move the ball after the fumbled punt, the Vikings took over at their own 15-yard line. On the second play of that drive, Reyes was intercepted, and Peru State took over at the MVC 13-yard line. The Viking defense held the Bobcats on first and second down, but Peru State was able to find the end zone on its third down play. The extra point was converted, and the Bobcats took a 14-13 lead late in the first half.

MVC looked to respond to the Peru State touchdown, and on their next possession quickly worked the ball into Bobcat territory. The big play on the drive was a 35-yard rush by Tillman that moved the ball to the Peru State 17-yard line. After a holding call against the Vikings, the drive stalled, and MVC settled for a 42-yard field goal. The attempt by Freshman Kicker Lucas Guilfoil (Lake Lotawana, Mo.), however, sailed wide right, and the Vikings still trailed 14-13.

Peru was unable to move the ball after the missed field goal, and the teams went in to the halftime break with the Bobcats holding on to a 14-13 lead.

The Vikings got the ball to open the second half, thanks to a fumble on the opening kickoff that was recovered by Junior Defensive Back Michael Barnes (Beaumont, Texas) at the Peru 25-yard line. However, Reyes was sacked on the first play of the drive, and the Vikings eventually went for it on fourth down, only to have a pass from Reyes to Junior Wide Receiver Jonathan Bird (Farmington, Mo.) broken up, giving Peru the ball after the turnover on downs.

The ensuing drive for Peru looked like one that could give the Bobcats a sizeable lead. Peru State slowly worked the ball downfield, moving from their own 20 yard line to eh MVC five yard line in just nine plays. Peru faced a first and goal from the MVC five yard line, but the Viking defense wouldn’t allow Peru State into the end zone. The Bobcats gained just one yard on first down, three yards on second down and were stuffed at the goal line on third down. Facing a fourth and goal from the one yard line, the Bobcats elected to go for the touchdown, and were stuffed just shy of the goal line by Barnes and Freshman Linebacker Luke Fischer (Wesley Chapel, Fla.) to give the Vikings the ball, and keep the score at 14-13 in favor of Peru State with seven minutes remaining in the third quarter.
Backed up at their own one yard line, the Vikings did little with the ball, and eventually punted from their own four yard line. Junior Punter Jason Mayden’s (Carrollton, Mo.) punt only went 28 yards, and Peru State took over at the MVC 32-yard line. However, for the second-straight drive, the Vikings forced a turnover. First though, Junior Defensive Lineman Ty Phillips (East St. Louis, Mo.) put Peru in an early hole in the drive, after coming up with a tackle for an eight yard loss on first down. On third down Senior Defensive Back Tyler Davis (St. Louis, Mo.) came up with an interception at the MVC 37-yard line, and returned it back to midfield.

With little time left in the third quarter, the Vikings were forced to punt, and Peru’s following drive also ended in a punt early in the fourth quarter. After Peru’s punt, the Vikings looked poised to retake the lead.

MVC faced a third-and-long early in the drive, with the ball at its own 18-yard line. However, the Vikings converted when Reyes hit Sophomore Wide Receiver Mikquel Johnson (St. Louis, Mo.) for a 36-yard pass completion and the Vikings were suddenly in Peru State territory. The Vikings eventually got to the Peru State 18-yard line, but were pushed back thanks to a holding penalty. Facing a second and long, Reyes connected with Sophomore Fullback Del’Von Franklin (Hawk Points, mo.) who eventually reached the Peru six-yard line, but Franklin fumbled and Peru State recovered, ending the Viking scoring threat with just over eight minutes remaining in the game.

Peru State began to run clock after the turnover, and eventually took just over five minutes off the clock, until the Viking defense forced the Bobcats to punt from their own 35-yard line. The punt, however, only went 26-yards, and the Vikings took over at their own 39-yard line with just over three minutes remaining in the game.

The Vikings struggled to get anything positive on their first three plays, gaining only seven yards. Facing a fourth and three from their own 46-yard line, the Vikings elected to try and convert for a first down, rather than punt the ball back to Peru State and hope for a defensive stop. On the fourth down play Reyes connected with Freshman Wide Receiver Darrian Turk (Silsbee, Texas), and the play not only was enough for a first down, but Turk raced 54-yards to the end
zone and scored the go-ahead touchdown with just under three minutes remaining. A two point conversion attempt from Reyes to Sophomore Wide Receiver Jacoby Bellard (Beaumont, Texas) was good, and the Vikings grabbed their first lead since the second quarter with a 21-14 advantage.

The ensuing kickoff went out of bounds, and Peru State started its final drive from their own 45-yard line. An Unsportsmanlike Penalty against MVC resulted in an extra 15 yards for the Bobcats, which put the ball at the MVC 40-yard line. Peru State quickly got to the MVC 16-yard line after just five plays, but a chop block penalty against the Bobcats and a sack by Senior Linebacker Andrew Huhman (Farmington, Mo.) created a fourth-and-long scenario for Peru State. Peru’s final play was a pass that was broken up by Senior Defensive Back Randolph Tribble (Port Lucia, Fla.), giving MVC the ball, and allowing the Vikings to hold on for the 21-14 win.

Leading the way for MVC on offense was Reyes who was 19 of 31 passing for 326 yards with two touchdowns and one interception. Tillman was the leading rusher for MVC with 117 total yards and a touchdown on 15 carries. Jarrell Davis had a big-game receiving, with six receptions for 129 yards and a touchdown. Turk had the second Viking receiving touchdown. The Vikings racked up 479 yards in the game, averaging 8.4 yards per play.

The Viking defense was led by Fisher who had a team-high 12 tackles. Phillips and Huhman each had 10 tackles each. Huhman, Senior Defensive Lineman Leon Jackson (Merced, Calif.) and Junior Linebacker Dominique McDonald (Houston, Texas) each had one sack. The Vikings on defense gave up 269 total yards in the game, with just 94 of those yards coming through the air.

Mayden had a 28 yard average per punt on just three punts, and Tyler Davis finished with 71 total return yards in the game.

The win improves MVC to 6-2 overall and 6-1 in HAAC play. Peru State drops to 7-2 overall and 5-2 in conference action.

Next week the Vikings host No. 4 Benedictine College. The Ravens are 9-0 overall on the season and 7-0 in HAAC play. A Vikings’ win over Benedictine next week would put MVC into a tie for first place in the conference, with only one game
remaining. Kickoff at Gregg-Mitchell Field for Senior Day will be 1:30 p.m. Nov. 9.

ABOUT MISSOURI VALLEY COLLEGE
Known for its dynamic, richly diverse, and friendly educational environment, Missouri Valley College offers many opportunities to grow in mind, body, and spirit. Grounded in the liberal arts, undergraduate studies empower students to master interdisciplinary skills needed to succeed in a knowledge-based global society. MVC offers over 40 academic programs, study abroad program, honors program, extracurricular activities, and 13 sports. The most popular majors include education and business, and some new majors are ag-business, nursing, graphic design, and health information systems (associate degree). Above all, Valley is committed to student success. For more information, call (660) 831-4000 or visit www.moval.edu.