

Force Season Ends in Playoff Loss to Boston 17-13



Photo Credit: Jeff White

EVANSTON IL: The Force (7-2) lost in surprising fashion in the second round of playoffs to the Boston Renegades, a team that Chicago had trounced 58-14 in May. The loss was both disappointing and unexpected. The first quarter proved to be an omen for what lie ahead as Chicago was flagged for 4 penalties and committed two turnovers. The errors continued throughout as the Force finished with nine penalties, which negated two touchdowns and killed numerous drives.

Boston had a first quarter touchdown and a controversial field goal on the final play of the first half to go into intermission with a 10-0 lead. On the field goal attempt, the ball hit the post and caromed downward, the two officials underneath the goal were split on whether it was good. Ultimately they decided in Boston's favor.

Chicago wasted several more scoring opportunities in the second half with momentum-killing turnovers (with 5 fumbles and 2 interceptions on the game) but was able to get on the board with a 74 yard TD pass to Jeanette Gray in the third quarter. Chicago pulled ahead in the fourth quarter on a 3 yard touchdown run by quarterback Rasan Gore to go up 13-10.

But the Boston team put together another drive and scored on a Whitney Zelee run to go up 17-13 with only a few minutes left in the game, a lead which they did not relinquish.



Photo Credit: Jeff White

Force Receiver Jamie Fornal caught 10 passes for 109 yards and was awarded the Offensive Game Day MVP. Fornal also had a 60 yard TD reception called back on a questionable illegal participation penalty. Fornal was forced out of bounds by the defender at the start of her route but re-established herself and was in bounds for several strides before catching the pass and proceeding to the end zone.

Carolyn Lee received the Defensive Game Day MVP award for her 7 tackles and several huge hits. Jill Airaki, Angel Smith, Darcy Leslie and Sonja Drangsholt also played well on defense.

The Force offense outgained the Renegades by almost 200 yards (491 to 296), but was unable to complete drives or capitalize on opportunities. Gore finished with 177 rushing yards and 247 passing yards. Chicago's defense played well enough to win but with the offense only putting up 13 points, Boston was able to steal a win on the road to advance to the conference championship, while Chicago is left to wonder how they could allow themselves to lose such a winnable game.

Head Coach John Konecki lamented his team's failure to convert on numerous opportunities, while lauding his opponent. "My hat goes off to the Boston Renegades who put together one of the gutsiest performances I have seen. This game further solidified for me that you have to show up and compete on every single play and avoid self-inflicted errors. We had a successful year from an outsider's perspective but ultimately fell short of the championship expectations we have for this organization."



Photo Credit: Jeff White