

Coyotes In Search Of First MVFC Win As They Host No. 7 Illinois State

BY JEREMY HOECK
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VERMILLION — Throughout its 10-game conference losing streak, the University of South Dakota football team has tried to find glimmers of hope.

Staying positive hasn't really been an issue for the Coyotes (2-8, 0-6), according to junior center Nick Olson.

Still in search of their first Missouri Valley victory, South Dakota will host No. 7-ranked Illinois State today (Saturday) at 1 p.m. at the DakotaDome.

"We've all been upbeat," said Olson, who will once again start on the offensive line due to injuries.

also

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rhythm in the Missouri Valley, which again has seven teams ranked in top 25 polls — and nine teams in the top 25 in the Gridiron Power Index.

After coming up just short in a number of league losses a season ago, the Coyotes have lost confer-

"Practice has been pretty energetic.

"That's never really a problem with coach (Joe) Glenn."

What has present problems, though, is finding way to develop a

ence games this year by 31, 11, 19, 40, 11 and 15 points.

"We've proven we can play with any of those guys," Glenn said. "Maybe not against North Dakota State, but we've gone toe to toe with everyone else.

"We just have to finish a game. That's the dream."

Each of the last two weeks, the Coyotes have built enough momentum to feel confident a victory could come. But in each case, at Youngstown State and last week at home against Western Illinois, issues in the second half doomed USD.

"That's our downfall," Glenn said. "It's either a fumble or an interception, or a long pass over our heads. Those things can't happen."

The biggest thing, Olson said, is converting long drives into touchdowns instead of field goals — though kicker Miles Bergner is still perfect (16-of-16) this season.

"We have to execute like we know we can," Olson said. "When we get opportunities, we have to take advantage of them.

"Just have to finish drives, turn field goals into touchdowns."

Playing an all-around clean game will certainly be challenging today against Illinois State (8-1, 5-1). The Redbirds average 37.4 points a game and only allow 17 a game.

They boast one of the nation's top rushers in Marshaun Coprich, who leads the Missouri Valley with 144.7 yards a game. He also has

eclipsed 100 yards in nine consecutive games.

And quarterback Tre Roberson, an Indiana transfer, averages 240 total yards a game, with 1,653 yards and 17 touchdowns through the air.

"They've got guys, but so do we," Glenn said. "We just need some turnovers."

The key to slowing down a high-powered offense?

"Especially against a team with a really good offense, when they have explosive players, we want to control the clock and get points on the board," Olson said.

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck. Discuss this story at www.yankton.net.

Hamlin Charges To 9B Title



Hamlin running back E.J. Drake, right, sheds the tackle of Faulkton Area defender Jack Aesoph during their Class 9B state championship Friday at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

BY NICK ROBINSON
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After being down 8-0 halfway through the first quarter, the Hamlin Chargers football team scored 36 unanswered points to win the 9B state championship at the DakotaDome on Friday afternoon.

"This victory is bitter-sweet," Hamlin coach Jeff Sheehan said. "We have been 31-2 over the last three years. Our guys went out there and earned it."

Faulkton Area (10-2) started the contest off on the right foot, using 13 rushing plays, which was capped off by a seven yard touchdown run and two-point conversion from halfback Jack Aesoph.

"We just needed to get a feel for what was going on," Sheehan said. "After that drive, our defense stepped up and we settled down."

However, Hamlin (12-0) answered right back. A 67 yard drive was finished by quarterback Brody Grantham, along with the two point conversion.

Going into the second quarter, the score was knotted at 8-8.

"We came out and got something going," Brody Grantham said. "After scoring, we made some adjustments and they just couldn't keep up with us."

After going back and forth, Hamlin was able to find the end zone. Brody Grantham found Ryder Grantham for a 17 yard touchdown pass, with a two point conversion. The Chargers led 16-8 heading into the second half.

To start the third quarter, Hamlin drained almost 10 minutes off the clock. Brody Grantham capitalized on a two yard touchdown run, which opened up a 22-8 lead as the third quarter winded down.

"That worked out perfect for us," Shehaan said. "We normally aren't like that, but we needed a drive like that and we got it."

On the ensuing drive, as Faulkton Area was driving the length of the field, quarterback Kurt Beidler was intercepted by Dyllan Weelborg. Brody Grantham scampered for a 63 yard touchdown to end the third quarter. The Chargers took a commanding 28-8 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

"We usually score on big plays and not long drives," Brody Grantham said. "So, for us to come out and hold onto the ball for as long as we did was very nice."

Hamlin 34, Faulkton Area 8

176 The Big Number

Number of rushing yards MVP Brody Grantham had in the game. He added three scores and 41 yards through the air.

The Chargers were able to add another score in the fourth quarter, which eventually earned them a 36-8 victory.

"The win feels good, it erases some memories of last year," Brody Grantham said. "We were so close against Avon last year, but to end it with a victory today feels right."

Hamlin tallied 294 total yards of offense. Brody Grantham, the recipient of the Joe Robbie MVP award had 176 rushing yards and three scores, while he also added 41 yards through the air and a touchdown. Ryder Grantham added a receiving touchdown for the Chargers. Defensively, Brody Grantham and Kale Stieg had 11 tackles.

Faulkton Area posted 221 total yards, with 139 of them on the ground. Darin Wieseler led the Trojans with 76 rushing yards. Carson Ortmeyer led the defensive charge with 14 tackles and a sack. Lane Meyer had a forced fumble, as well.

Shehaan wants his team to remember what it feels like to earn a state title.

"I want these guys to remember it," Shehaan said. "Last year we were so close. We fought so hard and came so far. I really am proud of this team."

HAMLIN 34, FAULKTON AREA 8	
FAULKTON AREA	8 0 0 0 — 8
HAMLIN	8 8 12 6 — 34
First Quarter	
Faulkton-Aesoph 7 run (Wiesler run), 5:14.	
Hamlin-Brody Grantham 5 run (Brody Grantham run), 1:12.	
Second Quarter	
Hamlin-Ryder Grantham 18 pass from Brody Grantham (Brody Grantham run), 3:31.	
Third Quarter	
Hamlin-Brody Grantham 2 run (run failed), 2:34.	
Hamlin-Brody Grantham 68 run (pass failed), :00.	
Fourth Quarter	
Hamlin-Niemann 55 interception return (run filed), 8:54.	
Individual Statistics	
RUSHING: Faulkton, Wieseler 21-72, Baloun 3-28, Ortmeyer 6-25, Aesoph 4-14, Beidler 5-0. Hamlin, B. Grantham 25-173, A. Niemann 6-52, C. Niemann 3-17, Drake 1-9, R. Grantham 5-5.	
PASSING: Faulkton, Beidler 9-16-2, 82 yards. Hamlin, B. Grantham 4-6-0, 41 yards.	
RECEIVING: Faulkton, Melius 3-37, Baloun 4-30, McCloud 1-11, Brand 1-4. Hamlin, R. Grantham 3-38, A. Niemann 1-3.	

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Hartington Cedar Catholic Moves On With 19-0 Victory

BY BRUCE VIERGUTZ
For the Yankton P&D

OAKLAND, Neb. — Hartington Cedar Catholic took advantage of a stingy defense and a generous Oakland-Craig offense to vault them to the Class C2 Nebraska state high school championship football game Nov. 25 at Memorial Stadium.

The Trojans, 10-2, downed Oakland-Craig 19-0 on a cold Friday night in Oakland.

Cedar Catholic will face David City Aquinas at 10:30 a.m. for the C2 title.

"I thought it would take 30 points to win the game, but obviously it didn't," Cedar Catholic coach Chad Cattau. "I was real proud of the way the defense played tonight. Everybody stepped it up."

The contest turned into a defensive stalemate from the beginning.

The Knights, 10-2, moved the ball throughout the game but tripped over its own shoelaces with seven turnovers.

Cedar Catholic scored its first touchdown on a drive that started at the Oakland-Craig 32-yard line.

It took the Trojans seven plays to hit paydirt when quarterback James Kaiser connected with tight end Ty Becker for a 6-yard touchdown pass with 10:12 left in the second quarter.

Cedar Catholic didn't

waste much time lighting up the scoreboard again when Ryan Becker recovered a fumble after a 10-yard loss by Oakland-Craig quarterback Cole Mitchell at the Knights' 20.

One play later, Kaiser hit Luke Burbach for a 20-yard touchdown pass with 9:05 showing.

Oakland-Craig reached the Trojans' 13-yard line just before halftime but couldn't punch it in.

The Knights came close to scoring in the fourth quarter when they drove down to the Cedar Catholic 4-yard line.

But on fourth down, linebacker Alex Fischer, along with an assist by defensive lineman Chase Kelly, tossed Mitchell for a 3-yard loss.

The Trojans tacked on an insurance touchdown when Kaiser scored from 25 yards out later on.

Becker led the Trojans with 89 yards rushing while holding Oakland-Craig stand-out Nick Arlt to 74 yards on the ground.

Cedar Catholic had 77 total yards in the first half to 118 for Oakland-Craig.

Aquinas defeated Cedar Catholic earlier this year.

"I told their head coach that I hope we see you down in Lincoln," said Cattau. "I'm just happy it all came true."

Moss Leads Buffalo past SDSU 69-67

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Justin Moss had career-highs of 25 points and 13 rebounds and Buffalo had two steals in the last 30 seconds to hold off South Dakota State 69-67 on Friday night in the season opener for both teams.

After Jarryn Skeete's layup with 41 seconds left put the Bulls up 67-66, the Jackrabbits had turnovers on their next two possessions. However, Shannon Evans was only able to make 2 of 4 free throws, giving South Dakota State a final chance.

Deondre Parks was fouled with 3 seconds left. He made the first free throw and intentionally missed the second but the Jackrabbits could not come up with the ball.

Evans added 17 points for the Bulls.

Jake Bittle had 16 points for South Dakota State. Cody Larson added 15 points and 15 rebounds and Zach Horstman 13 and 12. Both rebounding totals were a career best.

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