

281 Conference Rivals Set For Finals Showdown

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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If you put the Wolsey-Wessington Warbirds and the Woonsocket-Wessington Springs-Sanborn Central Blackhawks in matching jerseys, you might have a difficult time telling which team. Similar size. Similar style of play. Similar results, including each having the hunger from losing a state championship game a year ago.

That may be why the two 281 Conference teams are facing off for the Class 9AA championship today (Thursday) at the DakotaDome.

WWSSC lost to a senior-dominated Gregory team in the 9AA final a season ago, and that setback has driven the Blackhawks, according to head coach Jason Kolousek.

"Last year was a lot of fun, a great experience," he said. "But the kids we had coming back, when they walked out (of the Dome after the 2014 final), didn't want to have that feeling again."

Wolsey-Wessington had a similar experience, falling to a senior-laden Howard team in the 9A final.

"We've been determined to get back there," said Warbirds head coach Gordon Hooks.

The teams played with that drive all season, with the Blackhawks going undefeated and Wolsey-Wessington suffering just one setback, a 20-6 setback to WWSSC on Oct. 16. The game was the season-low in scoring for both teams.

"They are in our conference. Our kids have been playing against their kids since the seventh grade,"

Kolousek said. "We were fortunate (in the first meeting). They got inside the 10 a couple of times and we were able to hold them out of the endzone."

The Warbirds coach echoed that statement.

"Both teams came out and knew each other well. This week you might see more of the same," Hoods said.

The Warbirds boast a rushing triple-threat, led by senior Hunter Johnson (2,627 yards, 31 TD), junior Darian Ogunjemilusi (1,111 yards, 13 TD) and senior quarterback Jerret Weber (750 yards, 10 TD). All three have averaged better than 10 yards per carry, helping the team rush for 5,165 yards on the season.

Paving the way for the run game is a front five that averages 217 pounds, with end Brady Struck (Sr., 6-0, 240) and guard Dylan Hines (Jr., 6-0, 230) on the left side.

"The last couple of years, our offensive line has been key to our success," Hooks said. "We have developed some speed the last couple of years as well."

Weber has attempted just 54 passes on the season, completing 24 for 488 yards. Ogunjemilusi has a team-best 16 catches for 407 yards.

"Jerret is underrated as a passer," Hooks said, noting that Weber threw for 105 yards in the Warbirds' semifinal victory over Webster Area. "When he's had to, he's gotten the job done."

The Warbird defense is anchored by Hines (103 tackles), Johnson (99 tackles, 2 FR), Tyler Babcock (91 tackles) and Ogunjemilusi (90 tackles, 2 INT).

CLASS 9AA CHAMPIONSHIP

W-WS-SC (11-0) vs. Wolsey-Wessington (10-1)
1:30 p.m. • Radio: KJUV (1340 AM, Huron), KOKK (1210 AM, Huron), KQRN (107.3 FM, Mitchell) • TV: SDPB

W-WS-SC OFFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
G	56	Garrett Larson	6-2	221	Sr.
G	48	Jacob Foubger	6-1	212	Sr.
C	52	Chase Von Eye	6-3	240	Sr.
TE	53	Brady Tiede	6-5	215	Sr.
TE	3	Dillon Moore	6-2	170	Sr.
WR	1	Josh Feiner	5-9	155	Sr.
FB	13	Trinity Brunsen	6-0	170	Sr.
or	5	John Witte	6-0	165	So.
TB	23	Landon Ochsner	6-0	177	Sr.
QB	9	Tucker Kingsbury	6-0	172	Sr.

W-WS-SC DEFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
DE	53	Brady Tiede	6-5	215	Sr.
DE	56	Garrett Larson	6-2	221	Sr.
NG	52	Chase Von Eye	6-3	240	Sr.
OLB	3	Dillon Moore	6-2	170	Sr.
OLB	5	John Witte	6-0	165	So.
ILB	23	Landon Ochsner	6-0	177	Sr.
ILB	48	Jacob Foubger	6-1	212	Sr.
CB	14	Trent Kingsbury	6-0	160	So.
S	9	Tucker Kingsbury	6-0	172	Sr.

LEADERS

RUSHING: Landon Ochsner (202-1,516 yards, 24 TD); John Witte (63-423 yards, 6 TD); Tucker Kingsbury (65-257 yards, 6 TD)

PASSING: Tucker Kingsbury (53-92, 1,095 yards, 16 TD, 1 INT)

RECEIVING: Josh Feiner (20-376 yards, 5 TD); Brady Tiede (10-197 yards, 3 TD); Dillon Moore (8-184 yards, 3 TD); Landon Ochsner (6-230 yards, 2 TD)

DEFENSE: Jacob Foubger (61.5 tackles, 4 TFL); Garrett Larson (56 tackles, 8 TFL, 3 FR); Landon Ochsner (50.5 tackles, 9.5 TFL); Chase Von Eye (46 tackles, 14.5 TFL, 5 sacks); Dillon Moore (3 INT)

WOLSEY-WESSINGTON OFFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
LE	56	Brady Struck	6-0	240	Sr.
LG	44	Dylan Hines	6-0	230	Jr.
C	89	Calob Brandt	5-9	195	Jr.
RG	34	Tyler Horn	6-2	205	Sr.
RE	41	Tanner Zemlicka	6-0	215	Jr.
QB	9	Jerret Weber	6-2	190	Sr.
WB	14	John Hamilton	5-10	170	Sr.
HB	6	Hunter Johnson	5-11	170	Sr.
HB	23	Darian Ogunjemilusi	6-0	185	Jr.

WOLSEY-WESSINGTON DEFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
RE	56	Brady Struck	6-0	240	Sr.
RT	34	Tyler Horn	6-2	205	Sr.
LT	44	Dylan Hines	6-0	230	Jr.
LE	37	Zane Wuestewald	6-1	210	Jr.
RLB	6	Hunter Johnson	5-11	170	Sr.
MLB	10	Carter Langbehn	5-11	188	Sr.
LLB	23	Darian Ogunjemilusi	6-0	185	Jr.
S	9	Jerret Weber	6-2	190	Sr.
CB	5	Tanner Waters	5-9	160	So.

LEADERS

RUSHING: Hunter Johnson (247-2,627 yards, 31 TD); Darian Ogunjemilusi (92-1,111 yards, 13 TD); Jerret Weber (72-750 yards, 10 TD)

PASSING: Jerret Weber (24-54, 488 yards, 2 TD, 3 INT)

RECEIVING: Darian Ogunjemilusi (16-407 yards); Hunter Johnson (3-82 yards)

DEFENSE: Dylan Hines (103 tackles), Hunter Johnson (99 tackles, 2 FR), Tyler Babcock (91 tackles), Darian Ogunjemilusi (90 tackles, 2 INT); Jesse Mikrut (5 FR)

"With our front four, we try to create pressure," Hooks said. "We don't like to blitz a lot. Our cover guys have done a lot."

The Blackhawk offense has their own weapons, led by running back Landon Ochsner and quarterback Tucker Kingsbury. Ochsner has rushed for 1,516 yards and 24 scores, and has caught six passes for 230 yards and a pair of scores. Kingsbury is 53-92 passing for 1,095 yards and 16 touchdowns, throwing just one interception. Kingsbury also ranks third on the team with 257 yards rushing (6 TD), behind John Witte

(423 yards, 6 TD).

"Ochsner ran for us last year, but more of the load was put on him this year," Kolousek said. "One area we knew we had to improve this year was in the passing game. Tucker was good last year, but he has been more efficient this year."

Like the Warbirds, WWSSC has a solid line. The Blackhawks start five seniors up front, averaging 211 yards on the front five.

With such similar teams that are so familiar with each other, little things will be a

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P&D FILE PHOTO
Wolsey-Wessington's Darian Ogunjemilusi hauls in a pass as Howard's Luke Loudenburg bears down on him during the 2014 Class 9A championship football game at the DakotaDome in Vermillion. Wolsey-Wessington will face Woonsocket-Wessington Springs-Sanborn Central in the Class 9AA championship game today (Thursday).

Football | Class 9A Final

Sully Buttes Faces Unbeaten Hawks

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK
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502-71. Seven shutouts. Those are the numbers the Canistota Hawks put up in 11 games in 2015. Knocking off the Hawks is the task awaiting the Sully Buttes Chargers today (Thursday) in the Class 9A football championship.

"They are a very good football game that runs extremely well," said Sully Buttes head coach Mark Senftner of the Hawks. "If you slow down their 'I' game, they come back with option. If you focus too much on the run, they can play-action pass."

The Chargers have plenty of weapons themselves, including 6-3, 230-pound quarterback Scott Senftner. The senior has completed 62 percent of his passes, going for 1,998 yards and 27 touchdowns. He has also rushed for five scores and scored 23 conversions, either running or passing.

His primary target is senior Cody Nelson, who has 67 catches for 1,074 yards and 16 touchdowns. He has also rushed for four TDs and caught 10 two-point conversion passes.

"Those two have been working together the last four years. When they were freshmen, we put them on the field," Coach Senftner said. "They have a lot of game experience. They've spent a lot of time together."

Brady Hill has helped the Chargers balance their offense, rushing for 1,090 yards and 15 scores.

"Last year one of our running backs got hurt. We put Brady in, and the first game he saw a number of carries he went for over 200 yards," Coach Senftner said. "Once we got him on the field, he stayed on the field."

One challenge the Chargers have faced this season is a lack of size, especially on the defensive line, where their biggest player is an eighth grader, the 6-1, 225-pound Jett Lamb.

"Against a lot of the teams we've face this year we're under-sized, especially up front," Coach Senftner said. "We've had to deal with that."

That line will be tasked with keeping a powerful Canistota offense in check, an offense that runs behind guards that weigh in at 245, 275 and 280 pounds. The runners themselves are not small either, with 190-pound running back Jerad Nielsen (1,767 yards, 31 TD), 200-pound fullback Jalen Kaufman (549 yards, 8 TD) and 185-pound quarterback Shay Jolley (571 yards, 9 TD) carrying the bulk of the load.

"When we're at our best, we're hitting on quarterback, tailback and fullback, and mixing in play-action pass," said Canistota head coach James Strang. "We're a three,



P&D FILE PHOTO
Sully Buttes quarterback Scott Senftner fires the ball downfield as he is pressured by Scotland's Tanner Skorepa, 84, during their Class 9A football semifinal on Saturday in Onida. Senftner and the Chargers face Canistota in the Class 9A championship today (Thursday).

four-headed monster on offense."

The Hawks have not needed to pass often, but have done so effectively. Jolley is 42 of 68 for 858 yards and eight touchdowns. Nielsen (14-253, 1 TD), Drew Seubert (14-227, 3 TD) and Scott Jolley (6-236, 4 TD) getting the bulk of the catches.

The Canistota defense has been the product of years of work.

"Our junior high teams run the same scheme so that kids get plenty of time in it. By the time they are juniors and seniors, they know every in and out of it as well as the coaches, if not better."

The experience of the Canistota defense, with nine seniors in the 12-man rotation, has shown through. Of the 71 points allowed on the season, 30 came in one game. Three other teams scored two touchdowns each on the Hawks' defense. Seven other opponents were held scoreless.

Seubert has a team-best 61 tackles, as well as 17.5 tackles for loss.

"Drew has a great football head on his shoulders," Strang said. "He has the ability to recognize things from the field level. He is the captain of our defense and does great things for us."

Scott Jolley (57 tackles, 13.5 TFL, 3 INT), Nielsen (51 tackles, 6.5 TFL, 3 sacks, 3 FR) and others have made key impacts on the defensive side.

Canistota's solid run game and explosive defense have one thing in common: controlling the game. That is what the Hawks need to do to win the fourth title in program history, according to Strang.

"We need to keep our same philosophy that we have all year: try to control as much of the game as possible," he said. "We need to be able to adjust and adapt, which is very important."

Game time is set for 10:30 a.m.

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CLASS 9A CHAMPIONSHIP

Canistota (11-0) vs. Sully Buttes (10-1)
10:30 a.m. • Radio: KLXS (95.3 FM, Pierre), KPLO (94.5/100.5 FM, Pierre) • TV: SDPB

CANISTOTA OFFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
C	7	Jonathan Dick	5-10	190	Sr.
TE	12	Scott Jolley	6-0	190	So.
WR	15	Peyton Fairchild	6-0	150	Sr.
FB	16	Jalen Kaufman	5-9	200	Jr.
WR	17	Garrett Rotter	6-2	170	Sr.
QB	18	Shay Jolley	6-1	185	Sr.
RB	27	Jerad Nielsen	6-1	190	Sr.
TE/FB	33	Drew Seubert	6-0	190	Sr.
TE	48	Hunter Sperling	5-11	180	Sr.
G	60	Kasey Buse	6-3	280	Sr.
G	75	Noah Sandman	6-3	245	Sr.
G	78	Zavier Ward	6-3	275	Jr.

CANISTOTA DEFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
DE	7	Jonathan Dick	5-10	190	Sr.
LB	12	Scott Jolley	6-0	190	So.
DB	15	Peyton Fairchild	6-0	150	Sr.
LB	16	Jalen Kaufman	5-9	200	Jr.
LB	17	Garrett Rotter	6-2	170	Sr.
DB	18	Shay Jolley	6-1	185	Sr.
LB	27	Jerad Nielsen	6-1	190	Sr.
LB	33	Drew Seubert	6-0	190	Sr.
DE	48	Hunter Sperling	5-11	180	Sr.
DE	60	Kasey Buse	6-3	280	Sr.
N	75	Noah Sandman	6-3	245	Sr.
DE	78	Zavier Ward	6-3	275	Jr.

LEADERS

RUSHING: Jerad Nielsen (149-1,767 yards, 31 TD); Shay Jolley (77-571 yards, 9 TD); Jalen Kaufman (81-549 yards, 8 TD)

PASSING: Shay Jolley (42-68, 858 yards, 8 TD, 3 INT)

RECEIVING: Jerad Nielsen (14-253 yards, 1 TD); Drew Seubert (14-227 yards, 3 TD); Scott Jolley (6-236 yards, 4 TD)

DEFENSE: Drew Seubert (61 tackles, 17.5 TFL, 3 sacks, 2 FR); Scott Jolley (57 tackles, 13.5 TFL, 3 INT); Jerad Nielsen (51 tackles, 6.5 TFL, 3 sacks, 3 FR); Hunter Sperling (33 tackles, 9 TFL, 5 sacks); Peyton Fairchild (34 tackles, 11 pass breakups); Xavier Ward (29.5 tackles, 14 TFL, 2.5 sacks); Shay Jolley (26.5 tackles, 3.5 TFL, 17 pass breakups, 4 INT)

SULLY BUTTES OFFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
TE	10	Clay Feller	6-0	180	Jr.
G	21	Travis Hill	6-2	195	Sr.
C	55	Kole Pickner	6-0	175	Jr.
G	44	Jacob Howard	6-2	205	So.
TE	87	Greer Hofer	6-1	180	Jr.
QB	12	Scott Senftner	6-3	230	Sr.
RB	2	Shiloh Perkins	5-9	200	Sr.
RB	24	Brady Hill	5-8	150	Jr.
WR	32	Cody Nelson	5-11	165	Sr.

SULLY BUTTES DEFENSE

Pos	No	Name	Ht	Wt	Yr
DE	28	Dusty Norris	6-0	155	Jr.
DT	21	Travis Hill	6-2	195	Sr.
DT	54	Jett Lamb	6-1	225	8th
DE	87	Greer Hofer	6-1	180	Jr.
LB	66	Phillip Gilliland	5-11	180	Jr.
LB	12	Scott Senftner	6-3	230	Sr.
DB	10	Clay Feller	6-0	180	Jr.
DB	24	Brady Hill	5-8	150	Jr.
DB	32	Cody Nelson	5-11	165	Sr.

LEADERS

RUSHING: Brady Hill (184-1,090 yards, 15 TD); Scott Senftner (5 TD); Cody Nelson (4 TD)

PASSING: Scott Senftner (141-228, 1,998 yards, 27 TD)

RECEIVING: Cody Nelson (67-1,074 yards, 16 TD)

DEFENSE: Information not submitted

Minnesota Signs Claeys To 3-Year Contract To Succeed Kill

BY DAVE CAMPBELL
AP Sports Writer

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Tracy Claeys could have found opportunities at smaller schools to fulfill his lifelong desire to be a head coach.

Staying loyal to Jerry Kill turned out to be a wise career move, or, well, non-move.

Minnesota signed Claeys to a three-year contract through the 2018 season, dropping the interim tag from Kill's long-groomed sidekick Wednesday in favor of stability for the Gophers over a national search.

"You always have thoughts of writing your own program, and you prepare for that. But I also was smart enough to know that working for a guy like coach Kill, there was no need. Too many people think the grass is greener on the other side," Claeys said. "Why take a chance?"

The widely expected decision came exactly two weeks after Kill tearfully announced his retirement due to the continued difficulty of managing his epilepsy and the demanding job. Claeys joked that he tried to persuade Kill to put recent losses to Michigan and Ohio State on his record, since the succession wasn't formalized until now.

"It's a great honor to follow a guy who trained us so well," Claeys said.

The 46-year-old Claeys, who has been an assistant to Kill for 21 seasons, will make \$1.4 million next year, \$1.5 million in 2017 and \$1.6 million in 2018. That will put him near the bottom of the Big Ten in terms of overall football coach compensation. Kill received a raise in August that boosted his annual compensation to \$2.5 million.

"I'm comfortable with three years, because really any head coach has got three years. They could say there are five years on the contract. If they don't have three good years, they're done," Claeys said.

In skipping the search process, Minnesota didn't have to pay for a firm to vet and assemble candidates. True to his laid-back, no-frills form, Claeys negotiated the deal with interim athletic director Beth Goetz without an agent.

"Just get the job done and stabilize the program and move forward," said Board of Regents chairman Dean Johnson.

Goetz and Claeys told the team in the morning. The meeting was much happier than the one Kill called to tell the players he had to quit.

"We all felt like we lost

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