



Sports

College gameday

Central Missouri

vs.

Minnesota State

7 p.m., Blakeslee Stadium,
KTOE 1420-AM

The matchup

This is the first matchup between Central Missouri and Minnesota State, and this marks the first time that the Mules have played a game anywhere in Minnesota. Central Missouri, located in Warrensburg, Mo., was 5-6 last season, including a 3-6 record in the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. The Mavericks were 4-7, 2-5 in North Central Conference games. Central Missouri has won its last nine season-openers, while the Mavericks are 1-2 in openers under coach Jeff Jamrog, including last season's 34-16 victory over Truman State at Blakeslee Stadium.

King is back

Quarterback Ben King returns for his senior season, having played in 30 of 33 games in his career. King led the NCC with 301.7 yards passing per game, and he's well within range of breaking school career records for attempts, completions and yards. Last season, King completed 286 of 483 (59.2 percent) with 20 touchdowns and 13 interceptions. He set single-season school records with 40 completions and 505 yards in a victory against South Dakota last season. He also passed for 433 yards against Central Washington last season, the second-best effort in school history.



Ben King

Strength up front

Jamrog said he's as confident in his offensive and defensive lines as he's been in his four seasons at Minnesota State. The offensive line returns two starters in sophomore tackle Adrian Battles and junior center Jake Droessler, who started at guard last season. Sophomore guard Andy Schoonover, who missed last season with an ankle injury, played in six games and started two as a true freshman. Sophomore guard Mike Zeidler played in three games last season, while freshman tackle Jeremy Clark was a redshirt in 2006. The group has an average height of 6-foot-3 1/2 and average weight of 299 pounds. On the defensive line, ends Telega Bobmanuel and Randy Earl both started all 11 games last season, with Bobmanuel, a senior, making 50 tackles with four sacks and Earl, a sophomore, making 52 tackles with 5.5 sacks and two interceptions, one of which he returned for a touchdown. The tackles will be junior Andrew Franklin or senior Spencer Dickinson, as junior Chris Brunkhorst is questionable with an ankle injury.



Adrian Battles

Key stat

Central Missouri is 41-3 in the last six seasons when outrushing opponents, and a veteran offensive line could balance the inexperience in the Mules' backfield. Minnesota State had more rushing yards than its opponents in only two of 11 games last season. The Mavericks are hoping to improve on the 56.9 yards per game rushing last season.

Scouting Central Missouri

The Mules were tied in the second half in nine of 11 games last season, and five of their six losses were by 10 points or less. The Mules are looking to replace an All-American quarterback, leading rusher and top three receivers from last season. Sophomore Eric Czerniewski and junior Stinson Dean, a transfer from Wyoming, have been competing at quarterback. The offensive line returns four starters, led by senior Jon Books and junior Mike Gunselman. Defensively, the Mules return seven starters, led by senior safety Kendall Ricketts, a preseason All-American. In coach Willie Fritz's 10 seasons at Central Missouri, his teams have returned 20 punts and seven kickoffs for touchdowns, as well as recording 31 blocked punts.



Jon Books



Kendall Ricketts