



Sports

MINNESOTA STATE 26, AUGUSTANA 16



Pat Christian

Minnesota State running back Julian Phipps eludes a pair of Augustana defenders during a first-half run during Saturday's game.

Mavericks win NCC opener

MSU defense records five sacks, QB King passes 341 yards in conference opener filled with unusual plays

By Chad Courrier
Free Press Staff Writer

MANKATO — A fake field goal that didn't work, a two-point conversion for the defense, a fake punt that worked but was erased by penalty.

There were plenty of surprising, exciting and unusual plays in Minnesota State's football game Saturday night, but it added up to a rare North Central Conference-opening victory for the Mavericks.

"That was the most bizarre football game," coach Jeff Jamrog said. "There were a lot of key plays in that

ballgame."

Minnesota State defeated Augustana 26-16 at Blakeslee Stadium, the team's first victory in a conference opener since 1997.

"It was a great win for our program," Jamrog said. "We haven't (won the NCC opener) since I've been here. It gets you off to an excellent start."

The Mavericks drove quickly downfield on its first possession but stalled at the 2-yard line. A fake field goal didn't work, but the Mavericks were soon busy again, taking over near midfield after a punt. It took

eight plays for the Mavericks to score on a 9-yard option pass from Ben King to Tory Chappell, but a fumbled snap cost the Mavericks a PAT.

Augustana took advantage of a fumble to score its first touchdown, a 17-yard run by Joe Clark on the second play of the drive.

The Mavericks went ahead in the second quarter when King capped a seven-play drive with a 6-yard pass to Marcus Hansen. But on the two-point conversion, Augustana's Mike Vanasek made an interception and returned it to score the two points, cutting the lead to 12-9.

Hansen scored again just before halftime, following Randy Earl's quarterback sack that led to a fumble recovery by Spencer Dickinson.

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In five plays, the Mavericks went 26 yards with Hansen making another 6-yard touchdown catch. Jason Tompkins' PAT made it 19-9 at halftime.

"Once we start hawking the ball, we keep coming," said Earl, who had 10 tackles, including three tackles for loss, 2.5 sacks and a forced fumble. "We have a competitive streak on the defensive line."

Augustana hit a 69-yard scoring pass to open the third quarter, closing the gap to 19-16, but the Mavericks capitalized on a Vikings' miscue five minutes later to stretch the lead. On a fourth-down at the 27, the Augustana snapper sailed one over the punter's head, and after the punter tried to kick the ball out of the end zone but missed, MSU's Steve Robinson recovered for a

touchdown and a 26-16 lead.

Augustana was mounting a fourth-quarter drive and appeared to pick up a key first down near midfield on a fake punt, but an illegal shift penalty negated the play and forced a punt.

"We have a motto that we hold the rope," Earl said. "When the offense comes off the field, we want to hold them up. The defense loves to be out there, and we play as hard as we can."

The Mavericks made five sacks and had several other hard hits on quarterback Daniel Millus. Receiver Tommy Ellingworth made 11 receptions for 172 yards, which accounted for nearly 60 percent of Augustana's offense.

"That quarterback is probably pretty sore," Jamrog said. "I thought a couple of times he was done for the game."

King completed 31 of 53

passes for 341 yards. Omaar Balton made 11 receptions for 116 yards.

The Mavericks (3-1, 1-0 in NCC) are off next week, then travel to Omaha, Neb., on Sept. 29 for a conference game against Nebraska-Omaha.

"This was great," Earl said. "But we can only dwell on it for a little while," Earl said. "We have to get ready for (Nebraska-Omaha). But (winning the NCC opener) was one of our goals."

Notes

Sophomore safety Jesse Graves, who played at Mankato East, made his first career interception. Graves has started the last three games. ... Chappell and defensive end Telega Bobmanuel both left the game early with ankle injuries. ... Both teams were penalized for more than 100 yards. Augustana had 12



Minnesota State's Telega Bobmanuel (52) and Chris Brunkhorst chase down Augustana quarterback Daniel Millus during the first half Saturday.

Pat Christian

MSU: Win was 100th league win for Mavs

Minnesota State football summary

Augustana	7-2-7-9-16
Minnesota State	6-13-7-0-26
FIRST QUARTER	
MSU—Tory Chappell 9 pass from Ben King (kick blocked), 5:27.	
AC—Joe Clark 17 run (Ryan Grossman kick), 1:52.	
SECOND QUARTER	
MSU—Marcus Hansen 6 pass from King (kick pass intercepted), 9:21.	
AC—Mike Vanasek two-point conversion interception; MSU—Hansen 7 pass from King (Jason Tompkins kick), 1:08.	
THIRD QUARTER	
AC—Tommy Ellingworth 69 pass from Daniel Millus (Grossman kick), 14:32.	
MSU—Steve Robinson fumble recovery in end zone (Tompkins kick), 7:10.	

	AC	MSU
First downs	17	18
Rushing (at-yds)	26-62	17-46
Passing (com-at-at)	22-40-1	21-34-1
Penalty yards	246	341
Total offense (at-yds)	70-308	71-357
Fumbles (no-yds lost)	2-2	1-1
Penalties (no-yds)	12-109	15-110
Points (inc-avg)	7-31.9	6-42.0
Punt returns (no-yds)	2-27	2-41
Kick returns (no-yds)	5-105	2-33
Possession time	27:43	22:17
Third-down conversions	2-13	5-19
Fourth-down conversions	0-2	0-2
Sacks by (no-yds lost)	1-7	5-27
Attendance		4,112

RUSHING: Augustana—Clark 18-70, Huber 7-31, Woodquist 5-4, Millus 7-10, Minnesota State—Phipps 11-43, King 2-0, Chappell 2 (-2).
PASSING: Augustana—Millus 22-39-1, 246 yards; Schulte 0-1-0, 0 yards; Minnesota State—King 21-33-1, 341 yards; Cross 0-1-0, 0 yards.
RECEIVING: Augustana—Ellingworth 11-172, Huber 3-14, Clark 2-16, Brunkhorst 2-14, Andrews 2-11, Millus 1-14, Klumper 1-5, Minnesota State—Balton 11-116, Shaeffer 6-62, Phipps 3-26, Turner 3-22, Chappell 2-19, Newlin 2-13, Hansen 2-13, Sacker 1-9.
FIELD GOALS: Augustana—Grossman 0-1.

penalties for 109 yards, and the Mavericks were called for 15 penalties and 110 yards. The victory was the 100th league win for Minnesota State at Blakeslee Stadium. The Mavericks' record in the stadium is 100-131-2 in NCC games.