

College football gameday

Western Washington at Minnesota State

Noon, Blakeslee Stadium, KTOE 1420-AM

The matchup

Minnesota State (4-6, 2-5 in NCC) has a chance to move into a fourth-place tie in the conference with a victory today against Western Washington (4-6, 2-5). It's the first meeting between these two programs. The Mavericks have won consecutive games for just the fifth time since 2000, and a three-game winning streak has happened just four times since 1995. The Mavericks have had just 10 three-game winning streaks in the conference since 1983. Western Washington has also won consecutive games.

Two-game blitz

In the last two games, both victories, the Mavericks have scored 77 points and gained 1,044 yards in total offense. Quarterback Ben King has completed 74 of 109 passes for 938 yards and seven touchdowns, bringing his season totals to 250 of 419 for 2,682 yards and 17 touchdowns. Receiver Bryan Dalton has caught 24 passes for 287 yards and a touchdown, including a school-record 14 catches in the victory over South Dakota on Oct. 28. Dalton has 65 receptions this season and needs 12 to break Chad Ellman's record of 74, set in 1996.

Smith's finale

In just two seasons at Minnesota State, receiver Tyrell Smith has made his mark on the school record books. Smith has 467 yards in career punt returns, which ranks fourth, and he needs 39 yards to jump into second place. His 46 returns is third best. This season, he has 23 returns for 250 yards. He has 127 receptions, which ranks ninth, with 13 touchdowns, which ranks eighth.



Tyrell Smith

Happy returns for Matlock

Senior Melvin Matlock ranks fourth in program history for kick returns, with 32 attempts for 1,025 yards. He needs 199 yards to break the record, set by Scott Roach (1983-86). Matlock is averaging 32.03 yards per return, with a school-record 100-yard return for a touchdown last week against Central Washington.



Melvin Matlock

Scouting Western Washington

Running back Craig Garner has rushed for more than 100 yards in each of the last three games. Quarterback James Monrean has completed 130 of 220 passes for 1,424 yards with six touchdowns and eight interceptions, but sophomore Adam Perry has replaced Monrean in the last two games, rallying the Vikings to victories. Travis McKee has 30 receptions, one more than Brett Upchurch. Safety Todd McClellan has two interceptions in both of the last two games, earning NCC defensive player of the week honors. McClellan has five interceptions this season.

Compiled by Free Press staff writer Chad Courrier.