

## Football Swats Yellow Jackets

*Posted: Saturday, September 8, 2007*

SPEARFISH, S.D. - The UW-Eau Claire football team scored early and had some key takeaways to hold Black Hills State University in check as it won 14-3 and ran its record to 2-0.

The Yellow Jackets actually produced more total offense by a 173-to-161 margin. Black Hills State outrushed Eau Claire 58-to-49 while barely edging the Blugolds in the passing game 115-to-112.

However, Eau Claire intercepted three passes off Drew Hodgs and recovered two fumbles. The Blugold offense took care of the ball, throwing no picks while losing one fumble.

The scoring started with a blocked punt in the first quarter. Black Hills State had gone three-and-out with the game's opening drive and had to punt. **Nils Dillon** (*So.-Iola/Iola-Scandinavia*) got his hand on the ball while **Sam Cummings** (*Sr.-Rochester, MN/John Marshall*) recovered it at the Yellow Jacket 7.

After a couple runs that still left the Blugolds at the 7-yard-line, **Kyle Paulson** (*Jr.-Amery*) hit Dillon for a touchdown pass with 11:48 to go in the first quarter.

On the Yellow Jackets' next drive, **Dan Mahaffey** (*Fr.-Madison/James Madison*) recovered a fumble at midfield. Black Hills State marched from their 20 to their 45 with eight plays before Hodgs lost the ball during a rush.

The ensuing drive started with two incompletions before Paulson connected with **Cory Sartorelli** (*So.-Appleton/North*) for a 20-yard gain. Paulson came through again four plays later with a 15-yard pass to Dillon on fourth down. Sartorelli ran the final 12 yards over four plays and ended it with a one-yard jump into the end zone as Eau Claire went up 14-0 with 3:20 to play in the quarter.

On Black Hills State's following possession, Hodgs once again fumbled as Cummings recovered it at the Yellow Jacket's 42. Eau Claire got to the 32 after failing to convert on fourth down.

The defense came through once more on Black Hills State's drive when **Dave Wicklund** (*Jr.-Kewaskum*) picked off a Hodgs pass and returned it to the home team's 24-yard-line. Eau Claire would get to the 16, but a fourth-and-two rush from Sartorelli came up short.

On the ensuing Yellow Jacket drive, **Kyle Meulemans** (*Jr.-Wrightstown*) stepped up for the defense and intercepted a third-down pass. The Blugolds then had good field position once more with the ball at the Black Hills State 30.

On the third play of Eau Claire's drive, however, Paulson fumbled the ball and got hurt. Center **Matt Day** (*Jr.-Austin, MN*) was also injured on the same play as Eau Claire lost two players and the ball.

The two teams then swapped punts before Black Hills State started driving. They started at the Blugold 42 and used a couple Hodgs completions along with a 12-yard Joe Beehler run to get to the 14-yard-line. **Brent Weber** (*Sr.-Rice Lake*) then picked off a pass in the end zone to end the threat with halftime approaching.

In the second half, both teams punted on their first drives before Black Hills State went in for its only score of the day. The team started at Eau Claire's 41 and advanced to the 25 after Beehler, Tanner Tetrault, and Hodgs put together some runs. A rush and two incompletions followed, but Ryan Fagerstrom hauled in a 14-yard pass on fourth-and-eight for a first down. A penalty on first down brought the Yellow Jackets from the 9 to the 20 before a 9-yard rush and an incompleting. On third down, **Tom Dohr** (*Jr.-Neenah*) and **Nate Stemper** (*Sr.-St. Anthony Village, MN*) sacked Hodgs for 16 yards to force a field goal. Kraig Tafoya nailed the kick to make it 14-3 with 3:23 to play in the third.

Both teams mostly stayed on their side of the field the rest of the way until Eau Claire's final drive.

Paulson led Eau Claire before he got hurt, going 8-for-14 with 84 yards and a touchdown. **Joe Nikolay** (*So.-Abbotsford/Colby*) came in after him and went 4-for-6 with 28 yards. Dillon had three receptions for 26 yards and a score. Sartorelli also had three catches for 21 yards while Chris Hull had two for 27. Sartorelli had

77 yards on 32 carries to lead the running attack. Besides the fumble recovery, Cummings also had a team-high 14 tackles.

The Yellow Jackets fall to 0-2 after today's loss and have yet to score a touchdown.

The Blugolds have their first home game of the season on Saturday, though it will not be the Clearwater Bowl. The contest against Alma College (MI) begins at 1 p.m. at Carson Park.

Eau Claire-Black Hills State Box Score

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