

DULUTH--Injuries, a curse to most football coaches, is credited with helping UMD become a small college football power this season.

Strange as it may sound, it is entirely likely that the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference's top backfield might never have emerged without a rash of injuries in UMD's backfield.

Even then, it took a poor first game performance against Wisconsin State(Superior) to provide the trio---Crosby's Jerry Richardson, Robbinsdale's John Nachtsheim, and Cambridge's Bruce Johnson---with their big chance. They got it against Macalester. They responded with a 39-0 victory and have started as a unit ever since.

Richardson is the 'cinderella' figure of the group. The lithe junior spent the '59 season as a third string quarterback and appeared ready to join the group of high school stars who flopped in college ranks. Although some had given up on him, Richardson never lost confidence in himself. When injuries and other unexpected losses reduced the backfield to a skeleton position, Richardson jumped at the opportunity to become a halfback. His success has been so resounding that he is considered one of the top candidates for all-conference honors. The Crosby junior leads the Bulldogs in rushing, pass receiving, punting and scoring.

While sophomores Hachtsheim and Johnson are not in the cinderella class, both have fulfilled the pre-season promise.

	Att.	G.	L.	Net	Avg.
Richardson	43	373	3	370	8.6
Nachtsheim	48	243	5	238	5.
Johnson	45	243	7	236	5.2

This hard charging trio, directed by quarterback Wallace 'Skip' Fontaine, faces its toughest challenge of the season Saturday when the Bulldogs host title-favorite Concordia in a game which will go a long way toward deciding the MIAC championship. UMD is 4-0 in conference play. The nationally ranked Cobbers lost their first game 34-14 to Gustavus Adolphus last week.

A victory would move the Bulldogs to within one game of a share of their first league title. Victories over both remaining opponents, St. John's and St. Thomas, would clinch the championship.

Richardson and his first-team mates won't have to do it alone.

The injured regulars fullback John Drazenovich and halfback Bob Visina are healthy again, giving the Bulldogs the most potent one-two punch in the conference. William 'Rusty' Gilchrist, a regular last fall, and quarterback Ed Lundstrom, one of the season's big surprises, join them in providing UMD coach Jim Malosky with the coach's dream---two talented backfields.

The second team's running backs, in their first offensive action as a unit, raced for 149 yards last Saturday against Hamline. This talented foursome also ranks among the top 15 defensively.