



Football | 9/23/2016 8:02:00 PM | Shawn Smith, Sports Information Director

## Golden Eagles Set to Host Southwest Minnesota State Saturday in Crookston



**CROOKSTON, Minn.** - The University of Minnesota Crookston football team will look for a repeat of 2012, the last time the Southwest Minnesota State University Mustangs stepped onto Ed Widseth Field, as they host the Mustangs Sat., Sept. 24 at 1 p.m. The Golden Eagles defeated SMSU 33-28 Sept. 22, 2012.

- FB TWO DEEP
- SMSU TWO DEEP
- SMSU GAME NOTES
- FB NOTES UMC

Minnesota Crookston comes into the weekend with an 0-3 mark overall. Southwest Minnesota is 2-1 on the season, including a 42-38 upset win over University of Minnesota Duluth to open the season.

**Minnesota Crookston Golden Eagles**  
**Head Coach:** [Mike Fritze](#)  
**Record at UMC:** 3-33 **Season at UMC:** Fourth Season

**Southwest Minnesota State Mustangs**  
**Head Coach:** Cory Sauter  
**Record at Augie:** 31-39 **Season at SMSU:** Seventh Season

**Sept. 24, 2016 • Crookston, Minn. • Ed Widseth Field • 1 p.m.**  
**Video:** <https://portalstretchinternet.com/crk/#liveEventsTab>  
**Live Stats:** <http://www.sidearmstats.com/umcrookston/football/>  
**Live Audio:** [www.kroxam.com](http://www.kroxam.com)  
**Radio:** 1260 KROX AM/105.7 FM (Matt Bishop, PXP, Chris Fee, Color)

- #5StoryLines**
1. Can the Golden Eagles slow down the SMSU offense led by Blake Gimbel?
  2. Will a young UMC secondary mature in week four?
  3. Can the Golden Eagle defensive front continue to get pressure on the Mustangs?
  4. Can [Andre Person](#) become a big factor against what seems to be a susceptible defensive front for SMSU?
  5. Will [Adam Connette](#) get the touches against the Mustangs?

**#CloggingUpTheMiddle**  
 UMC sophomore defensive tackle [Bubba Cook](#) has had a strong start to his career in just over a year with the Golden Eagles. Cook has had a strong start to the season. The defensive tackle has nine tackles with four tackles for loss and three sacks. Cook will continue to clog up the middle, while looking to pressure the SMSU quarterback.

**#ChasingRecords**  
 UMC wide receiver [Adam Connette](#) has been a factor for the Golden Eagle offense during the past two weekends. Connette had 10 grabs for 96 yards against Concordia-St. Paul and three grabs for 42 yards versus Augustana. He showed why he earned All-NSIC North Second Team honors as a sophomore. Connette is chasing several receiving records at UMC. The Corona, Calif. native needs 15 receptions to move past Carl Aho for second in receptions all-time. In addition, he needs just 320 yards to pass Aho for the all-time lead for receiving yards in a career. Connette will look to continue to etch his name in the record books as his junior season continues.

**#ForgotAboutDre**  
 UMC senior running back [Andre Person](#) is still looking to get going on the pace with which he finished last season. Person was an All-NSIC North Second Team pick last season. He has 156 yards rushing and 30 yards receiving so far this season. Person finished last season with 767 yards and seven touchdowns on the ground. He is a vital cog to the UMC offense and he will look to get going against Southwest Minnesota State on Saturday.

**#FloatLikeAButterfly**  
 The Golden Eagles have been led defensively this season by linebacker [Ali Alkhatib](#). Alkhatib leads all UMC defenders with 22 tackles with 3.5 tackles for loss on the season. Alkhatib will continue to look to make a big impact for the Golden Eagles as they look to slow down a potent Southwest Minnesota State offense. He might not quite be like Muhammad Ali, but this Ali continues to improve for the Golden Eagle defense making his hometown of Rosemount proud.

**#Tidbits**  
 Minnesota Crookston enters the weekend with an 0-3 mark on the season. The Golden Eagles have battled injuries through the first three weeks but will look to get things going against Southwest Minnesota State University. UMC is averaging 216.7 yards per game. They will have to get more going to keep up with a potent SMSU offense.

- Minnesota Crookston has done a better job in recent weeks of getting the ball to their big three offensively with [Andre Person](#), [Adam Connette](#) and [Rod Stewart](#). Person has 52 carries for 156 yards and one touchdown. In the receiving game, Connette is leading the way with 15 grabs for 144 yards this season, while Stewart has 12 carries for 135 yards.

- The UMC defensive backfield has gone through several key injuries this season with the loss of [Dion Wallisch](#) for the season at corner, and injuries to Terry Ford, Jr. and [Jake Newman](#). The Golden Eagles will look to have Newman back at safety in some way, shape or form this weekend. In the absence of the injured, UMC has counted on several young players including [Aeric Berner](#), [Omar Porte](#), [William Cole](#) and [Trevor Long Jr.](#) to mature quickly. They will have to continue to develop and help slow down a potent passing game from SMSU.

- UMC has had as strong of a pass rush as they have in recent years. Through three games, the Golden Eagles have seven sacks. They would finish last year with 12. UMC has been led by the play of defensive tackle [Bubba Cook](#), who has 2.5 sacks. He has been joined by [Casey Kraska](#), who has two sacks on the year. The defensive front will look to put pressure on SMSU quarterback Blake Gimbel.

- Southwest Minnesota State is averaging 477.0 yards per game on the offensive end, led by 155 yards per game on the ground and 322 through the air. The Mustangs are led by Blake Gimbel at quarterback, who has passed for 908 yards through the air with 11 touchdowns. His top targets have been Nate Huot and Gabriel Galamue, who each have over 200 yards receiving this year. On the ground, SMSU looks to Divonte Beale's 262 yards on the season. He is averaging 87.3 yards per game.

- The Mustangs are allowing 396 yards of offense per game this season to their opponents. They seem to be vulnerable in the running game as they are giving up 210 yards per game. Southwest Minnesota State hasn't put much pressure on opposing quarterbacks this season with just two sacks. They have looked to Gene Germain's 33 tackles this season to lead the way. Caleb Leichtnam has 24 tackles and 4.5 tackles for loss, while Daniel Halverson has 14 tackles and 3.5 tackles for loss, along with one sack.

- The Golden Eagles will look to be the first team to test Austin Wells in the field goal game. The SMSU kicker has yet to attempt a field goal this season as the Mustangs have not attempted one at all through three games. He is 16-of-17 on point-after attempts. Wells was 3-of-5 last season on field goals with a long of 26.

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PLAYERS MENTIONED	
<b>#7 Ali Alkhatib</b> LB / 5' 9" / Sophomore	<b>#6 Aeric Berner</b> DB / 5' 10" / Sophomore
<b>#25 Will Cole</b> DB / 6' 0" / Sophomore	<b>#11 Adam Connette</b> WR / 5' 10" / Junior
<b>#94 Bubba Cook</b> DL / 5' 10" / Sophomore	<b>#28 Casey Kraska</b> DL / 6' 2" / Senior
<b>#40 Trevor Long, Jr.</b> DB / 5' 11" / Redshirt Freshman	<b>#47 Jake Newman</b> DB / 6' 0" / Junior
<b>#30 Andre Person</b> RB / 5' 10" / Redshirt Senior	<b>#16 Rod Stewart</b> WR / 5' 11" / Sophomore

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