



Football | 9/23/2017 12:35:00 AM | Shawn D. Smith, Sports Information Director

Minnesota Crookston Hits Road To Take On No. 7 Sioux Falls Saturday Night

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CROOKSTON, Minn. - The University of Minnesota Crookston football program wraps up their slate against NSIC South opponents on Sat., Sept. 23 at No. 7 University of Sioux Falls. They will face-off at 6 p.m. at Bob Young Field in Sioux Falls, S.D.

MINNESOTA CROOKSTON GAME NOTES

MINNESOTA CROOKSTON TWO DEEP

Minnesota Crookston is looking to get on a winning track after starting the season 0-3. Sioux Falls is 3-0 in their first season under Jon Anderson. It will be a meeting of first-year coaches as [Mark Dufner](#) is in his first year as head coach for the Golden Eagles after 15 years as an assistant at Minnesota Crookston.

Minnesota Crookston
0-3 Overall

0-0 NSIC North

Head Coach:

[Mark Dufner](#)

Sioux Falls

3-0 Overall

0-0 NSIC South

Head Coach:

Jon Anderson

Date: Sept. 23, 2017

Time: 6 p.m. C.T.

Site: Sioux Falls, S.D.

Stadium: Bob Young Field

Surface: AstroTurf 3D

Capacity: 5,400

Series: USF leads 2-0

Last: Sioux Falls won 45-21 in 2015 at Ed Widseth Field

Radio: 1260 KROX AM/105.7 FM

Leo Blavin (Play by Play)

Video: Stretch Internet

<https://portal.stretchinternet.com/siouxfalls/>

Live Stats: <http://www.sidearmstats.com/siouxfalls/football/>

#5StoryLines

1. Can the Golden Eagle get the ball in the hands of [Adam Connette](#)?
2. Can Minnesota Crookston get a running game going against a strong USF defense?
3. Can the defense slow down USF running back Max Mickey?
4. Can the Golden Eagle defense come away with big turnovers?
5. Can the Minnesota Crookston O-Line hold off the Sioux Falls pass rush?

#NotYourRegularJoe

Minnesota Crookston quarterback [Joseph Nava](#) can make things happen through the air and with his feet. The redshirt freshman is coming off 279 yards through the air for two touchdowns in a 33-14 loss to Wayne State. Nava will look to continue to develop as he heads into the fourth game of the season.

#CurtainCall

Minnesota Crookston wide receiver [Adam Connette](#) has had one of the most impressive careers of any player in program history. Connette is already the program's all-time leading receiver with 199 receptions for 2,348 yards. Connette is looking to close his career out in the final eight games on a strong note. He is coming off a school record 14 receptions against Wayne State. Connetted totaled 153 yards and two touchdowns in the game. He pulled closer to setting the record for all-time receiving touchdowns. Connette needs just five touchdowns to tie Carl Aho and six to break his record.

#WatchOutForWillIX2

Minnesota Crookston has looked to [Will Cross](#) and [Will Cole](#) defensively this season. Cole, a safety, comes into the weekend leading the team defensively with 29 tackles. Cole also has an interception on the season. [Will Cross](#), is the program's middle linebacker. He has followed up a strong freshman season with a strong sophomore season. Cross has 24 tackles with a forced fumble on the year. Look for these Will's to make an impact this weekend against Sioux Falls.

#Playmaker

Freshman corner [Donovan Baker](#) has proven to be a defensive playmaker for the Golden Eagles. The Tampa, Fla. native had a forced fumble at the one-yard line in the first game against Upper Iowa. He continued to show his playmaking ability as he jumped a route for an interception last week versus Wayne State. Baker will look to continue to make an impact in week four against Sioux Falls.

#Tidbits

- Minnesota Crookston Breakdown

The Golden Eagles come into the weekend with an 0-3 mark. Minnesota Crookston played a strong game last week and were up 7-0 on Wayne State late in the second quarter before giving up a 19-0 run going into the half. Minnesota Crookston will look to build off the positives of last week against the Wildcats. [Joseph Nava](#) continues to improve at quarterback after passing for 279 yards last week. He will look to get the ball to his receivers, including top target [Adam Connette](#). Minnesota Crookston has struggled to get much going on the ground as they come in averaging just 95.7 yards per game in the run game. They will have the Golden Eagles to look to get [Kevin Evans](#) and Nava going in the ground game. They will have a tough task at hand as USF ranks No. 1 in the nation in rush defense.

Defensively, the Golden Eagles must improve on the ground as they face USF's Max Mickey, who has rushing for 481 yards and five touchdowns. Minnesota Crookston comes in giving up 320 yards rushed per game to their foes. The Golden Eagles will have to get key turnovers defensively. They will look to their strong linebacking corps of [Ali Alkhatib](#), [Will Cross](#) and [Chuck Lofquist](#) to lead the way. In the defensive backfield, look for safeties [Trevor Long, Jr.](#) and [Will Cole](#) to continue to make an impact. On the defensive line, Minnesota Crookston has shown improvement each week, but they will need crucial play from the front four to contain the run game.

The Golden Eagles had a rough go at times in the punt game last week with [Stephen Day](#) and [Lincoln Tappe](#). All of the special teams will continue to be a crucial part of the game as Minnesota Crookston heads into week four.

- USF Breakdown

Led by its defense and an offense improving week-by-week, USF has opened with three wins by double digit margins – 26-7 over then #10 Minnesota Duluth, 37-7 over Northern State and 38-7 against U-Mary. In week one, the Cougars, aided by a defensive score by Derek Landis and a punt return TD from Jason Towns, defeated defending North Division champ Minnesota Duluth, 26-7, snapping the Bulldogs 22-game home winning streak. NSIC Defensive Player of the Week Dennis Gardeck had five sacks to lead a USF defense that recorded a program D2 best eight sacks, 14 tackles for loss and held UMD to -19 yards rushing on 30 carries. In a 37-7 win over Northern State last Saturday, Max Mickey rushed 24 times for a career-high 217 yards and two TDs, including an 87-yard run. The defense held NSU to two net yards rushing on 30 attempts and 191 total yards. Meanwhile the USF offense rolled up 415 yards in total offense, including 246 rushing. The Cougars had a season-high 473 yards and limited U-Mary 188 total yards in a 38-7 road win. Against U-Mary, Max Mickey had 150 yards rushing and two TDs while Jason Towns had 128 all-purpose yards and two TDs. QB Ian Fieber was 20-of-28 for 206 yards and a TD.

When USF faces UMC, the Cougars will look to continue to play its stellar defense. USF ranks first in NCAA DII in rushing defense (29.0 yards per game), and are second nationally in scoring defense (7.0 ppg) and total defense (196.3 ypg).

- Teammates

The story of Jake Olson, a blind long snapper for the University of Southern California has garnered attention all over the sports world. Minnesota Crookston has a great connection to Olson in the form of his former holder on kicks in high school, [Adam Connette](#). Connette and Olson were teammates and friends while at Orange Lutheran High School in California. Connette has gained motivation from the story of Olson, and how their are no excuses for being able to accomplish your dreams.

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PLAYERS MENTIONED

#7 Ali Alkhatib LB / 5' 9" / Junior	#25 Will Cole DB / 5' 11" / Junior
#11 Adam Connette WR / 5' 9" / Senior	#54 Will Cross LB / 5' 10" / Redshirt Sophomore
#37 Stephen Day K/P / 6' 0" / Redshirt Junior	#41 Chuck Lofquist LB / 6' 0" / Senior
#40 Trevor Long, Jr. DB / 5' 10" / Redshirt Sophomore	#2 Joseph Nava QB / 5' 9" / Redshirt Freshman
#8 Lincoln Tappe WR / 5' 8" / Junior	#21 Donovan Baker DB / 5' 10" / Freshman

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