

Football | 10/12/2017 1:28:00 PM | Shawn D. Smith, Director of Athletic Media Relations

Minnesota Crookston Treks to Bismarck to Face U-Mary Saturday

CROOKSTON, Minn. - The University of Minnesota Crookston heads to Bismarck, N.D. Sat., Oct. 14 to take on University of Mary at 1 p.m. The game will be U-Mary's homecoming. It will pit two 0-6 (0-2 NSIC North) teams who are both looking to break into the win column on the weekend.

Both teams have played close games over the last five seasons with the Marauders winning the last four. The last Minnesota Crookston win in the series came Nov. 10, 2012 with the Golden Eagles winning 37-36 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, N.D. Minnesota Crookston broke through on a Talo Pascal touchdown with a Richard Haley two-point conversion in the final seconds.

- Minnesota Crookston Breakdown

Minnesota Crookston comes into the weekend with an 0-6 (0-2 NSIC North) mark. The Golden Eagles made great progress last weekend against St. Cloud State as they had their best offensive output of the season and played strong on special teams. The key this weekend will be getting all three units on the same page.

The Golden Eagles were led last weekend by four passing touchdowns from [Jeremy Neuman](#). Whether it is Neuman or [Joseph Nava](#) at quarterback, Minnesota Crookston now knows that both are capable. Nava can beat you with both his legs and through the air, while Neuman is a more traditional quarterback. Neuman did a great job of finding his top two targets in [Rod Stewart](#) and [Adam Connette](#) against the Huskies. Both players had big days with two touchdowns receptions apiece. Stewart and Connette will continue to be keys in every game the rest of the game.

Minnesota Crookston continues to struggle overall with their run-game as they are averaging just 65.3 yards per game on the ground. The Golden Eagles had some positive signs against St. Cloud State as back-up running back [Shavez Hawkins Jr.](#) found some success after [Kevin Evans](#) struggled. Hawkins rushed 12 times for 54 yards for 4.5 yards per carry against St. Cloud State. Minnesota Crookston hopes to get more consistent production from either of their backs heading into the U-Mary game.

Defensively, the Golden Eagles come in allowing 535.0 yards per game with 256.7 through the air and 278.3 yards per game on the ground. The key this weekend will be containing U-Mary's option game as they are a run-first offense going against a team that has struggled at times to contain the run. [Will Cole](#) has led the way with a strong junior season at safety. Cole has 52 tackles with 1.5 tackles for loss and an interception. [Ali Alkhatib](#) has also been strong with 48 tackles, four tackles for loss and a half sack, while [Will Cross](#) has notched 45 tackles, 1.5 tackles for loss and a half sack. On the defensive line, [Austin Howard](#) and [Ben Branscom](#) have caused the most havoc with 1.5 sacks on the season. Howard has 4.5 tackles for loss, while Branscom and [Devante Nutall](#) have notched three tackles for loss.

On special teams, [Stephen Day](#) is coming off a strong day punting against St. Cloud State has he averaged nearly 50 yards a punt with three punts downed inside the 20-yard line.

- U-Mary breakdown

The Marauders run an unconventional offense with the triple option attack. U-Mary comes in tallying 275.5 yards of offense per game with 205.2 yards per game on the ground and just 70.3 per game through the air. U-Mary has used two quarterbacks this season with Garrett Weissinger and Colton Farmer. Weissinger passed for 112 yards versus Bemidji State. Farmer has been the better rusher this season with 190 yards on the ground, while Weissinger has notched 135 yards rushing. DeShawn Guy leads the team with 275 yards rushing and two touchdowns on the year, while Paul Cuptill has notched 189 yards and Devin Hope has 140 yards rushing on the season.

The top target in the pass game has been Tyson Carney with six catches for 114 yards and a touchdown, while Jordan Beaty has notched two catches for 88 yards and a touchdown.

Defensively, U-Mary is giving up 451.5 yards per game overall, including 248.5 yards per game on the ground and 203 yards a game through the air. The Marauders are led by Noah Krebs' 52 tackles on the season. Jarad Zittleman has 36 tackles, 2.5 tackles for loss and an interception. Daniel Hudrlik and Brock Pittsley lead the pass-rush. Hudrlik has 2.5 tackles for loss and two sacks, while Pittsley has notched 16 tackles and three sacks.

- Last Meeting

U-Mary won the last meeting between the two schools 26-13 Oct. 15 at Ed Widseth Field. The Marauders were led by 20 second-half points as they took the victory over the Golden Eagles. The Marauders found success on the ground with 246 yards rushing. Zack Graves led the way with 96 yards on the ground, while Zach Podoll added 66 yards and Farmer had 44 yards. Through the air, Farmer led the way going 11-of-16 for 154 yards and two touchdowns. [Nathan Cole](#) led Minnesota Crookston with 219 yards passing. Connette caught seven of Cole's passes for 94 yards, while Stewart notched four catches for 76 yards and a touchdown.

U-Mary

0-6 Overall
0-2 NSIC North
Head Coach:
Josh Kotelnicki

Minnesota Crookston

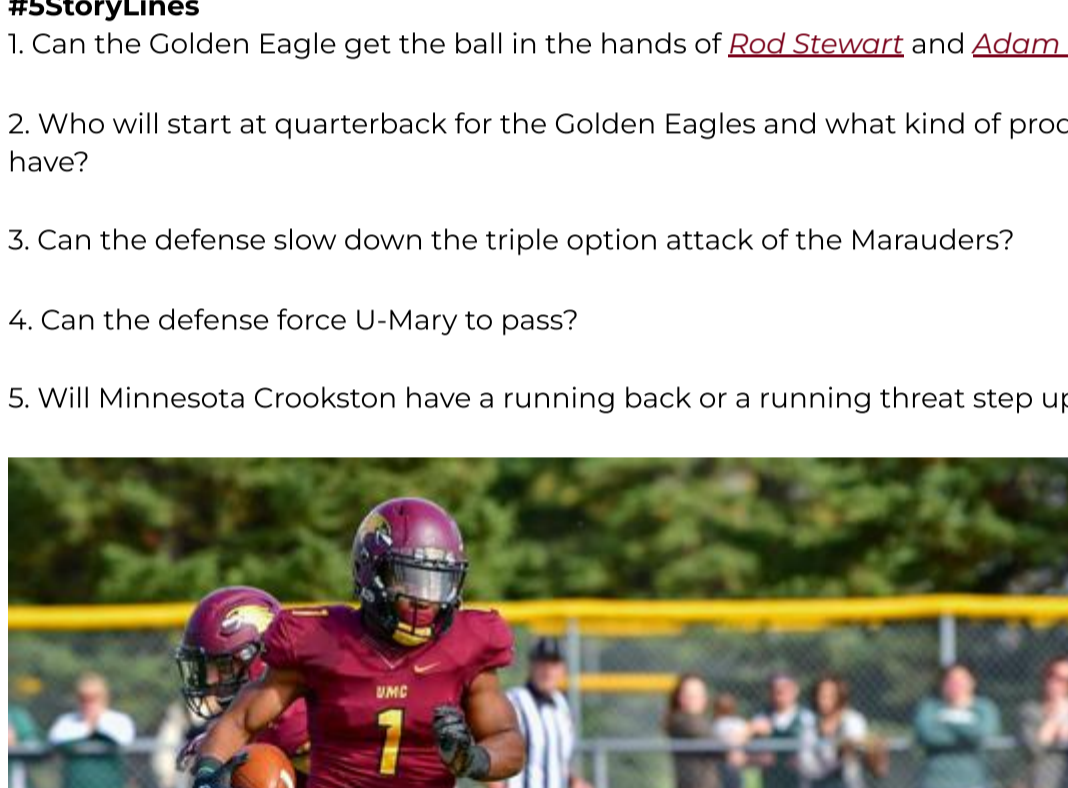
0-6 Overall
0-2 NSIC North
Head Coach:
Mark Dufner

Date: Oct. 14, 2017
Time: 1 p.m. C.T.
Site: Bismarck, N.D.
Stadium: MDU Resources
Community Bowl
Surface: Turf
Capacity: 6,000
Series: U-Mary leads 10-1
Last: U-Mary won 26-13 in 2016 at Ed Widseth Field

Radio: 1260 KROX AM/105.7 FM
Leo Blavin (Play by Play)
Video: Stretch Internet
<https://portal.stretchinternet.com/umary/>
Live Stats: <http://www.sidearmstats.com/mary/football/>
TV: BEK Prime

#5StoryLines

- Can the Golden Eagle get the ball in the hands of [Rod Stewart](#) and [Adam Connette](#)?
- Who will start at quarterback for the Golden Eagles and what kind of production can he have?
- Can the defense slow down the triple option attack of the Marauders?
- Can the defense force U-Mary to pass?
- Will Minnesota Crookston have a running back or a running threat step up in the game?



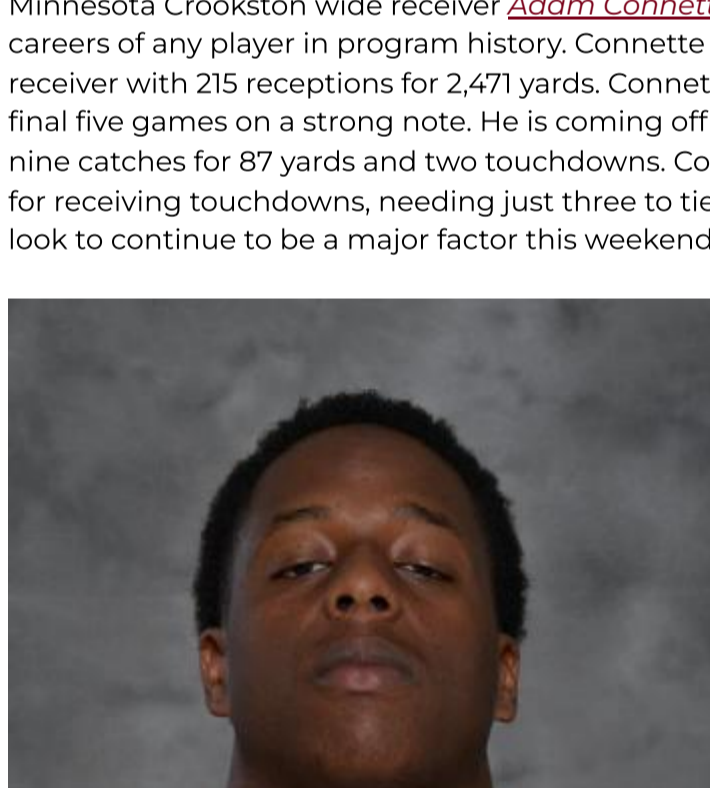
#TheOtherRodStewart

Minnesota Crookston wide receiver [Rod Stewart](#) had one of his best games of the season last weekend against St. Cloud State. The junior from Fort Worth, Texas had six grabs for 88 yards and two touchdowns against the Huskies. So while he might not be the [Rod Stewart](#) who is famous for his hits such as "Maggie May", he is still making a positive impact at Minnesota Crookston.



#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 215 receptions for 2,471 yards. Connette is looking to close his career out in the final five games on a strong note. He is coming off a strong game against the Huskies with nine catches for 87 yards and two touchdowns. Connette inched closer to the school record for receiving touchdowns, needing just three to tie and four to pass Carl Aho's mark. He will look to continue to be a major factor this weekend at U-Mary.



#NuissanceInTheBackfield

[Austin Howard](#) has been the best Golden Eagle at creating havoc in the opposing backfield this season. The senior from New Albany, Miss., has a team-leading 4.5 tackles for loss and is tied for the team lead with 1.5 sacks. Howard will look to continue to improve and impact both the passing game and run game of the Marauders this weekend in Bismarck, N.D.



#Coop

Redshirt Freshman [Anfernee Cooper](#) has been one of the best Golden Eagles at coming up with the big turnover this season. He returned a special teams touchdown for a fumble against Minnesota State and picked up an interception last week versus St. Cloud State. [Coop](#) will look to make the big play defensively versus U-Mary this weekend.

[Print Friendly Version](#)

PLAYERS MENTIONED

#15 Nathan Cole QB / 6' 4" / Senior	#7 Ali Alkhatib LB / 5' 9" / Junior
#95 Ben Branscom DL / 6' 0" / Redshirt Freshman	#25 Will Cole DB / 5' 11" / Junior
#11 Adam Connette WR / 5' 9" / Senior	#29 Anfernee Cooper DB / 5' 10" / Redshirt Freshman
#54 Will Cross LB / 5' 10" / Redshirt Sophomore	#37 Stephen Day K/P / 6' 0" / Redshirt Junior
#9 Austin Howard DL / 5' 11" / Redshirt Senior	#2 Joseph Nava QB / 5' 9" / Redshirt Freshman

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