



## Minnesota Crookston Kicks Off 2019 Season with Red River Valley Showdown Against MSU Moorhead

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By: Shawn D. Smith, Director of Athletic Communications

**CROOKSTON, Minn.** - The University of Minnesota Crookston football team opens up the 2019 season Thurs., Sept. 4 at 7:05 p.m. The game kicks off Midco Sports Network's "NSIC Thursday Night Game of the Week" series, as the Golden Eagles take on Minnesota State University in the Red River Valley Showdown sponsored by State Farm Insurance. The two teams are battling for the State Farm Traveling Trophy.

The game is part of a jam-packed day of festivities, as Minnesota Crookston will look to have a "Cold Out" at Ed Widseth Field. In addition, the first 200 fans receive a free Golden Eagle t-shirt, Minnesota Crookston will also give away Apple AirPods and a 55-inch HD TV courtesy of Midco. In addition, come on out and enjoy great tailgating with the UMC Teambacker Tailgate starting at 4:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to come and get ready for the game. The Crookston Classic Cruisers will also be tailgating in the lot North of Ed Widseth Field, as will the Minnesota Crookston students. Just for Kix Dance Studio will be performing at half-time of the game.

**MINNESOTA CROOKSTON (0-0, 0-0 NSIC)  
VS. MINNESOTA STATE MOORHEAD (0-0, 0-0 NSIC)  
THURS., SEPT. 4 | 7:05 P.M. C.T. | CROOKSTON, MINN.  
ED WIDSETH FIELD  
Radio 1260 KROX AM/95.7 (Leo Blawin)  
TV: Midco Sports Network (David Brown and Jody Norstett)  
Live Site: <https://goldeneaglesports.com/idearminata/football/summary>  
Video: <https://portal.stretchinternet.com/erk/>**

### GOLDEN EAGLE TIDBITS

1. [Julian Scott](#) returns at quarterback for the Golden Eagles after playing in all 11 games as a junior for Minnesota Crookston. Scott passed for 1,173 yards and three touchdowns last season. The key for Scott is minimizing errors, as he had six interceptions last year. Scott will also have more of a positive impact through the run game. He rushed for 186 yards net last season, but gained 519 yards overall. The key for Scott also is will he have the time with strong blocking from the offensive line.
2. The Golden Eagles last defeated MSU Moorhead Oct. 19, 2015 as they won 20-14 at Ed Widseth Field over the Dragons. Minnesota Crookston broke a 14-14 tie in the third quarter when Kyle Larson found Talo Pascal on a 12 yard strike, on what would prove to be the game-winning touchdown. The Golden Eagles were led by Pascal, who rushed for 132 yards that day.
3. MSU Moorhead leads the series in NSIC play 13-7. The Golden Eagles took four of five games in the series from 2004-08 for their best streak in the long-standing Red River Valley rivalry.
4. The Golden Eagles have several key pieces back on the offensive line with [Tate Kowalski](#), [Josh Swack](#), [Zach Lippold](#), and [Justin Baines](#), all starting games during the 2018 season. Minnesota Crookston will look for improvement with the aid of several newcomers in [Ethan Mendez](#), [Nick Gomez](#), [Ahmad Quebley](#) (who redshirted last year), [Sami Lehner](#), and transitioned defensive lineman [Jordan Ferguson](#). The offensive line play will be key for Minnesota Crookston.
5. Minnesota Crookston returns a lot of talent at wide receiver led by freshman phenom [Garry Crookston](#), who amassed over 600 yards and three touchdowns in his first year. The Ancker, Minn., native is joined by senior [Jonathan Mould](#), who made an impact as a junior college transfer in 2018. Mould had 23 grabs for 279 yards in his first year in the Maroon and Gold in addition, [Shonte Smith](#) and [Tyler Bialik](#) return the unit. Also watch out for [Jeremy Anwar](#), who saw time late last season at wide receiver, but has made the full transition from quarterback. The Golden Eagles will also be aided by [Nathan Coy](#), who missed last season. Coy had nine catches for 126 yards as a freshman in 2017. Minnesota Crookston will also look to production from redshirt freshman Wyatt Sheddick, III, and [AJ Volger](#).
6. The backfield will be relatively new for Minnesota Crookston in 2019 with [Blake Hogg](#), a redshirt sophomore, as the lone returnee. Harr saw limited time last year with 12 carries for 19 yards, but will see added carries in 2019. In addition, watch out for junior college transfer [Joseph Eubanks](#), along with freshman [Alex Foltz](#). Foltz was an AP All-State quarterback at Spring Grove HS, as he helped lead his squad to two-straight nine-man championships.
7. Perhaps the strength of the entire team for the Golden Eagles is the defensive line. Minnesota Crookston returns a lot of talent with three starters back in the fold. Defensive tackle [Joe Warner](#) will anchor the front unit. Warner notched 47 tackles with 6.5 tackles for loss and one sack. In addition, the Golden Eagles return both defensive ends with [Ben Branson](#) and [Zander Quinn](#). Branson notched 36 tackles with five tackles for loss and two sacks, while Quinn tallied 34 tackles with 7.5 tackles for loss and two sacks. Minnesota Crookston also brings back [Jordan Liss](#), [Reece Williams](#), and [Austin Blasing](#). In addition, watch out for University of North Dakota transfer [Wesley Jefferson](#), who will look to make an impact, along with redshirt freshmen [Austin Erdmang](#) and [Dylan Wheeler](#).
8. The linebacking corps is led by returning senior leader [Will Cross](#), who was knocked out for the season in last year's MSU Moorhead game. Cross had 79 tackles with three tackles for loss in 2017. In addition, [Austin Steele](#) returns after making a huge impact in Cross' absence. Steele was fourth on the team in 2018 with 77 tackles. He was second on the team with five tackles for loss and led the squad with three sacks.
9. The defensive backs are led by [Zavier Long Jr.](#), who was third on the team with 79 tackles in 2018. In addition, [Antwan Cooper](#) is back after tallying 28 tackles and seven pass break-ups last year. The Golden Eagles also bring back [Javon Crookston](#) from last season, along with sophomore [Tarence Hildreth](#). Minnesota Crookston will look to redshirt freshman [Jahvon Parris](#) to aid their efforts, along with Oregon transfer [Elijah Jones](#), while UND transfer [Cory Claiborne](#) might see time, as well.
9. On special teams, Minnesota Crookston is led by returning sophomore kicker [Jared McClernagh](#). The native of Lucas, Texas, had a strong first year, going 4-of-7 on field goals with a long of 47. At punter, the Golden Eagles will have to replace [Spencer Doe](#). Minnesota Crookston will look to redshirt freshman [Dathan McRoberts](#). A key to all the special teams units is the return of long snapper Stephan Reed.
10. [Mark Duffner](#) and Steve Laqua are former colleagues, as the two worked as assistant coaches at Minnesota Crookston during the 2004 season. Duffner is in his third year as head coach for the Golden Eagles after serving 15 seasons as an assistant. He is on his 18th season on staff at Minnesota Crookston.
11. The Golden Eagles are looking for their first home win at Ed Widseth Field since Nov. 7, 2015 as they earned a 45-14 win over Minot State at home.
12. Minnesota Crookston's last time on TV at home was Sept. 14, 2017 on Midco Sports Network against Wayne State. The Wildcats won 35-14 on that day. Minnesota Crookston was down just 19-7 at half, but was unable to close the gap.

### MSU MOORHEAD NOTES

1. MSU Moorhead is coming off their best season in 27 years as they posted an 8-4 mark in 2018. The Dragons made an appearance in the Mineral Water Bowl last season.
2. The Dragons are led by returning quarterback Jakup Smari, who passed for 1,504 yards and 11 touchdowns, and rushed for 156 yards. At running back, Herman Gray is back after rushing for 277 yards and two touchdowns, while Denver Colquhoun amassed 342 yards and a touchdown. The leading receiver returning for MSU Moorhead is Coady Sheehahan, who notched 879 yards with four touchdowns last season. In addition, Zach Sweep is back after tallying 438 yards receiving last year. The Dragons averaged 380.9 yards per offense last season.
3. Defensively, MSU Moorhead allowed 391.0 yards per game to opposing offenses. Deiondre Taylor is back at cornerback for the Dragons after notching 66 tackles, five tackles for loss, and three interceptions in 2018. In addition, Matt Scholt is back at middle linebacker after tallying 65 tackles and 6.5 tackles for loss. The defensive line is anchored by Darius Woods-Stelcher, who amassed 30 tackles with 11 tackles for loss and 8.5 sacks.

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