



Football | 7/26/2018 11:00:00 AM | Shawn D. Smith, Director of Athletic Media Relations

# Minnesota Crookston Football Selected 16th in NSIC Preseason Coaches' Poll



**BURNSVILLE, Minn.** – The University of Minnesota Crookston football team was selected 16<sup>th</sup> in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) Preseason Coaches' Poll. The Golden Eagles received 15 points in the poll.

Minnesota Crookston is going into their second season under Head Coach [Mark Dufner](#). The Golden Eagles will have new coordinators this season with [Jared Hottle](#) as offensive coordinator and [Tom Miller](#) as defensive coordinator. The Golden Eagles return [Kevin Evans](#) (Sr., RB, Groveland, Fla.) in the backfield and [Rod Stewart](#) (Sr., WR, Fort Worth, Texas) at wide receiver. [Jeremy Neuman](#) (R-So., QB, Andover, Minn.) appeared in six games as a redshirt freshman at quarterback and will compete for the starting job. On the offensive line, experienced starters [Noah Lee](#) (R-Sr., OL, Vadnais Heights, Minn.), [Logan Moreau](#) (R-Jr., OL, Lake Nebagoman, Wis.) and [Josh Lanasa](#) (So., OL, Soo Hill, Mich.) return to the fray. The Golden Eagles return three All-NSIC picks with Stewart, defensive back [Will Cole](#) (Sr., DB, Compton, Calif.), and punter [Stephen Day](#) (R-Sr., K/P, Eveleth, Minn.). In addition to Cole, Minnesota Crookston returns [Will Cross](#) (R-Jr., LB, Turtle Lake, Wis.) and [Ali Alkhatib](#) (R-Sr., LB, Rosemount, Minn.) at linebacker. At defensive back [Anfernee Cooper](#) (R-So., Fort Worth, Texas) and [Trevor Long, Jr.](#) (R-Jr., DB, Brooklyn Park, Minn.), join Cole, while the Golden Eagles return several experienced players up front led by [Brent Reed, Jr.](#) (R-So., DL, Arlington, Texas), who notched 48 tackles last season.

[Rod Stewart](#) (Sr., WR, Fort Worth, Texas) and [Will Cross](#) (R-Jr., LB, Turtle Lake, Wis.) were selected as Minnesota Crookston's Players to Watch. Stewart returns after earning All-NSIC First Team honors as a kick returner and All-NSIC Second Team accolades as a wide receiver. Stewart was second in the league in kickoff returns at the conclusion of the season averaged 28.3 yards per game. Stewart finished the season ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the nation in kickoff returns. He also earned Don Hansen NCAA Division II Honorable Mention honors as a junior. Stewart had a strong season as a receiver for the Golden Eagles in 2017 with 47 receptions for 633 yards and five touchdowns. Cross has been a lynchpin for Minnesota Crookston at middle linebacker position. He finished third on the team with 79 tackles in 2017. He notched three tackles and a half sack for the Golden Eagles last season. Cross was an All-NSIC Honorable Mention pick in 2016.

Minnesota State University was selected first in the NSIC Preseason Coaches' Poll. The Mavericks received 225 points and 15 first-place votes after going 13-1 in 2017 and advancing to the NCAA Division II Quarterfinals. Winona State University was slotted second with 197 points and one first-place vote.


Minnesota State wide receiver Shane Zylstra was selected as the NSIC South Preseason Offensive Player of the Year, while Minnesota State defensive tackle Zach Dodge was named NSIC South Preseason Defensive Player of the Year. University of Minnesota Duluth wide receiver Jason Balts was selected as NSIC North Preseason Offensive Player of the Year. Bemidji State University defensive back Gunner Olszewski garnered NSIC North Preseason Defensive Player of the Year accolades.


Minnesota Crookston opens up the season Thurs., Aug. 30 at 6:30 p.m. against Minnesota State University Moorhead at Alex Nemzek Stadium in Moorhead, Minn.


**Overall Points**


- 1. Minnesota State (15)..... 225
- 2. Winona State (1)..... 197
- 3. Sioux Falls..... 195
- 4. Minnesota Duluth..... 194
- 5. Bemidji State ..... 165
- 6. Augustana..... 148
- 7. St. Cloud State..... 133
- 8. Northern State..... 114
- 9. Wayne State..... 111
- 10. MSU Moorhead..... 99
- 11. Upper Iowa..... 96
- 12. Southwest Minnesota State..... 69
- 13. Minot State..... 63
- 14. Concordia-St. Paul..... 62


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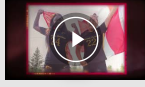
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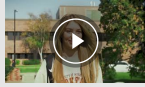
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- 15. University of Mary..... 34
  - 16. Minnesota Crookston..... 15
- first place votes in ( )*

**North Division** **Points**

- 1. Minnesota Duluth (7)..... 49
  - 2. Bemidji State ..... 42
  - 3. St. Cloud State (1)..... 33
  - 4. Northern State..... 32
  - 5. MSU Moorhead..... 26
  - 6. Minot State..... 20
  - 7. University of Mary..... 15
  - 8. Minnesota Crookston..... 7
- first place votes in ( )*

**South Division** **Points**

- 1. Minnesota State (7)..... 49
  - 2. Winona State (1)..... 43
  - 3. Sioux Falls..... 37
  - 4. Augustana..... 28
  - 5. Wayne State..... 25
  - 6. Upper Iowa..... 18
  - 7. Concordia- St. Paul..... 14
  - 8. Southwest Minnesota State..... 10
- first place votes in ( )*

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**PLAYERS MENTIONED** ▾

**#7 Ali Alkhatib**

LB / 5' 11" / Redshirt Senior

**#3 Anfernee Cooper**

DB / 5' 11" / Redshirt Sophomore

**#37 Stephen Day**

K/P / 6' 1" / Redshirt Senior

**#77 Josh Lanasa**

OL / 6' 5" / Sophomore

**#76 Logan Moreau**

OL / 6' 4" / Redshirt Junior

**#25 Will Cole**

DB / 6' 0" / Senior

**#54 Will Cross**

LB / 5' 11" / Redshirt Junior

**#22 Kevin Evans**

RB / 5' 11" / Senior

**#40 Trevor Long, Jr.**

DB / 6' 0" / Redshirt Junior

**#14 Jeremy Neuman**

QB / 6' 1" / Redshirt Sophomore



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