

2002 MIAC Football Athletes of the Week

November 11, 2002

Tri-Offensive

Concordia College quarterback Ryan Hebrink (Junior, Sacred Heart, Minn./Renville County West HS) accounted for six touchdowns in Concordia's 63-21 victory over St. Thomas on Friday. The 63 points was the third-highest point total in a single game in school history. With the victory, the Cobbers finished the season 7-1 in the MIAC -- good for second place. Hebrink ran for two touchdowns and threw for four more. On the day, Hebrink was 11-for-20 for 238 yards in passing and he also ran for 85 yards. The four passing touchdowns and 238 yards are career highs for Hebrink, who was directly responsible for 323 of the team's 515 yards of total offense. The 515 yards in offense was the highest output of the year for the Cobbers.

Gustavus Adolphus College wide receiver Ryan Hoag (SR, Minneapolis, Minn./Washburn HS) made 13 catches for 175 yards and one touchdown and compiled 310 all-purpose yards to help the Gusties slip past St. Olaf 24-23 in the Metrodome last Thursday. Hoag made significant contributions in all aspects of the game as he made 13 catches for 175 yards, returned three kickoffs for 122 yards (including a 68-yard return in the fourth quarter), rushed one time for 12 yards, returned one punt, and attempted one pass (which was incomplete on an end-around option). He set school records for catches in a game with 13 and all-purpose yards in a game with 310. In the fourth quarter with Gustavus trailing 23-17, Hoag made three catches for 30 yards. All three catches resulted in first downs including a 12-yard catch on third-and-10 from the Gustavus 49-yard line with approximately five minutes remaining in the game. The Gusties went on to score the winning touchdown with 2:00 left in the game. Hoag's touchdown catch was a two-yard grab that gave the Gusties a 17-13 lead in the third quarter. He also made a 44-yard catch in the first quarter that led to the Gusties first touchdown and a 7-0 lead. Hoag averaged 40.7 yards per return on three kickoff returns with returns of 68, 31, and 23.

St. Olaf College wide receiver Frank Bass (SO, Minneapolis, Minn./Roosevelt HS) caught 11 passes for 197 yards and one touchdown in Thursday's 24-23 loss to Gustavus in the Metrodome. This marked Bass' fifth straight 100-yard receiving performance. His 69-yard first quarter touchdown sparked a 23-7 run by the Oles. Bass also had 57 yards on three kickoff returns. Bass finished the season with 73 catches for 1,109 yards and nine touchdowns and 1626 all purpose yards.

Co-Defensive

Concordia College cornerback Josh Vickerman (Junior, Alexandria, Minn./Jefferson HS) had two interception, returning one for a touchdown in Concordia's 63-21 win over St. Thomas. The two pickoffs moves him into second place in the MIAC with six total interceptions. For the game, Vickerman had 2 interceptions and six tackles. Vickerman was part of the Cobber defense that held the Tommies scoreless in the second half, and limited their high-powered offense to only 260 total yards.

Hamline University linebacker Andy Seliga (SR, Inver Grove Heights, Minn.) had a big day for the Pipers during their 21-13 win over Augsburg Thursday night at the Metrodome. Seliga had 13 tackles (all assists), including a crucial stop on Augsburg's final play of the game as he tackled Auggie running back Pat Lofboom at the 2-yard line on 4th-and-goal from the 1-yard line.

Special Teams

Saint John's University wide receiver Blake Elliott (Junior, Melrose, Minn.) had 266 all-purpose yards and four touchdowns in a 31-26 come-from-behind win over Bethel on Friday at the Metrodome. Elliott caught six passes for 74 yards and three touchdowns, rushed the ball two times for six yards, returned five punts for 85 yards and one touchdown and returned four kickoffs for 101 yards. With SJU losing 20-17 in the fourth quarter, Elliott caught an eight-yard touchdown pass and then returned a punt 78 yards for a touchdown to give SJU a 31-20 lead and the outright MIAC title. Elliott set or tied SJU records in the game for career pass receptions, career total touchdowns scored and single-season touchdown receptions. Elliott also set a new MIAC record for career total touchdowns scored with 54. SJU is 9-1 overall, 8-0 in the MIAC and will open NCAA playoff action on Nov. 23.

November 4, 2002

Co-Offensive

Saint John's University seniors Ross Denne (QB, Avon/Albany HS) and Kent Crowley (RB, Iona/Fulda HS) were named co-offensive players of the week for their strong play in a big win over St. Thomas.

Denne completed 17-of-29 passes for 408 yards, four touchdown passes and one interception in a 48-28 win over St. Thomas on Saturday, Nov. 2. The 408 yards tied for the fourth most yards passing in school history. Denne, who only played three quarters due to injury, threw touchdown passes of five, 19, 36 and 65 yards as SJU collected 709 yards total offense. SJU is now 8-1 overall, 7-0 in the MIAC and has clinched the automatic bid into the NCAA playoffs.

Crowley rushed for 153 yards and two touchdowns, as well as catching nine passes for 112 yards in a 48-28 win over St. Thomas on Saturday, Nov. 2. Crowley scored on touchdown runs of two and 10 yards as SJU collected 709 yards total offense.

Defensive

Bethel College outside linebacker Jon Foss (Senior, Hinton, Iowa) led Bethel's defense in the Royals' come-from-behind 29-22 win over Augsburg on Saturday. Foss finished the day with 22 tackles (7 solo, 15 assists), including three tackles for loss (for seven yards) and 1.5 sacks (for four yards). Foss is second all-time in the MIAC in sacks with 33.5. After starting the season 1-4, Bethel has won four games in a row leading into their last game against St. John's on Friday night.

Special Teams

Carleton College wide receiver Eric Svestka (FR, Decorah, Iowa) scored a on 78-yard kickoff return to open the second half in Carleton's 24-14 loss to Hamline. His return, the longest in more than 10 years at Carleton, tied the game at 14-14. Svestka took a hand-off on a planned reverse from the regular return man and broke two tackles along the sideline to score.

October 28, 2002

Co-Offensive

Gustavus Adolphus College running back Andy Traetow (SR, Jackson, Minn./Jackson Co. Central), playing with a broken bone in his hand, rushed for 252 yards and five touchdowns to help Gustavus defeat Hamline 42-23 in St. Paul last Saturday. Traetow set school records for yards rushing in a game and rushing touchdowns in a game. He also went over 1,000 yards rushing for the season (1085) and became the first Gustavus player to ever rush for 1,000 yards in a season twice in his career. Traetow broke a bone in his left hand on the first Gustavus offensive series of the game and played the rest of the game (27 more carries for 222 yards and all five touchdowns) with a broken hand and did not fumble. His touchdown runs were for 1, 4, 4, 10 and 17 yards. His long run for the game was 51 yards. He averaged 7.9 yards per carry on the day. On the season, Traetow has carried 168 times for 1085 yards and 10 touchdowns. He ranks among the top 20 in Division III in both yards rushing per game at 135.6 and all-purpose yards per game at 181.2. Gustavus is currently 5-3 overall and 4-3 in the MIAC.

St. Olaf College running back Jason Moore (FY, Brooklyn Park, Minn./Brooklyn Center HS) had 30 carries for 230 yards, including five third-down conversions, and broke a St. Olaf freshman school record in a 34-6 non-conference victory over Macalester. The Oles led just 7-6 at halftime but outscored the Scots 27-0 in the second half. Moore helped St. Olaf rush for a season-high 280 yards. The Oles improved to 5-3 overall.

Defensive

Saint John's University defensive back Jeremy Goltz (JR, Tracy, Minn./Tracy-Milroy-Balaton HS) had three tackles, three interceptions and three passes defended in a 34-9 win over Concordia-Moorhead that let the Johnnies move into sole possession of the conference lead. Goltz helped the SJU defense hold Concordia-Moorhead to 279 yards total offense. Goltz has seven interceptions in eight games this season. SJU is now 7-1 overall and 6-0 in the MIAC.

Special Teams

Carleton College free-safety Ben Phillips (SO, Woodstock, Ill.) blocked a punt and a field goal in Saturday's game at Bethel. His blocked field goal, a 37-yard attempt, came with 5:41 left in the first half and Carleton trailing 21-0. His blocked punt came late in the fourth quarter and gave the Knights their best scoring chance, as the offense started at Bethel's 45-yard line.

October 21, 2002

Offensive

Bethel College running back Mike Johnson (Senior, Pine City, Minn.) repeated as MIAC Player of the Week after he led the Royals in Saturday's dominating 41-20 road win over Gustavus. Johnson broke a Bethel single-game record with 46 carries as he finished with 237 yards rushing (second most in school history) and tied his own school record with four rushing touchdowns, including a 55-yarder. Johnson is averaging 121.6 yards per game rushing for the Royals, now 3-2 in the MIAC.

Defensive

Bethel College linebackers Jake Schneider (First-year, Inver Grove Heights, Minn./Simley H.S.) had his best game of the season in Bethel's 41-20 win over Gustavus. Schneider finished the game with six tackles, including four solos, 2.5 tackles for loss for 15 yards and 1.5 sacks. He also intercepted two passes and broke up two passes.

Special Teams

St. Olaf College punter/kicker Nate Johnson (Sophomore, Menomonie, Wis.) continued his stellar season for the Oles by averaging 35 yards on eight punts, including one punt downed on the Pipers' one-yard line. His strong performance on kickoffs on Saturday held Hamline to an average return of 11 yards per kickoff on eight kickoffs. Johnson has had eight punts downed inside the 20 in seven games. St. Olaf improved to 4-3 overall and 3-3 in the conference.

October 14, 2002

Offensive

Bethel College running back Mike Johnson (Senior, Pine City, Minn.) scored the go-ahead touchdown from two yards out with 20 seconds remaining to give Bethel a 36-32 home win over St. Olaf Saturday in Arden Hills. During the winning drive, Johnson had a 29-yard run on 3rd-and-10 and a six-yard run on a crucial 4th-and-two situation. For the day, Johnson, the 2001 conference MVP and a Division III All-American, carried an amazing 39 times for 166 yards and three touchdowns. He also caught one pass for six yards. Johnson has 36 career touchdowns. Bethel improved to 2-2 in the MIAC and 2-4 overall.

Defensive

Bethel College linebacker Jon Foss (Senior, Hinton, Iowa) again led the Bethel defense in its 36-32 home win over St. Olaf Saturday in Arden Hills as he recorded 14 total tackles, including four solos, and 2.5 tackles for loss, including two sacks. He currently has 15.5 tackles for loss on the season including 9.5 sacks. Foss has 30 career sacks to rank second in MIAC history.

Special Teams

Gustavus Adolphus College kicker John Kurhajetz (First-year, Willow River, Minn./Moose Lake-Willow River HS) made his first collegiate field goal, was 2-for-2 on extra points including the game-winning point with 2:21 to go, and was effective on five kickoffs to help the Gusties post a 25-24 comeback road victory over previously-MIAC unbeaten St. Thomas Saturday. Gustavus trailed 14-0 when Kurhajetz made a 21-yard field goal. His second extra point of the day, with 2:21 remaining in the game broke a 24-24 tie. His high kickoffs held St. Thomas to just a 10-yard return average on five kickoffs. Kurhajetz is the third leading scorer for the Gusties this season with one field goal (1-for-2) and 21 extra points (21-23) for 24 points. The Gusties are now 4-2 overall and 3-2 in the MIAC.

October 7, 2002

Co-Offensive

University of St. Thomas quarterback Nick Ambrasas (Senior, St. Paul, Minn./Arlington HS) played just one minute into the fourth quarter but threw for a career-high 387 yards in the leading the Tommies to a 35-15 win at St. Olaf. Ambrasas completed 29-of-42 passes and two

TDs, with one attempt picked off. He has thrown a TD pass in 20 consecutive games and now has 44 TDs passes in 23 career games. After St. Olaf pulled within 14-8 early in the third quarter, Ambrasas guided the offense to three consecutive TD scoring drives and left the game with a 35-8 lead. The Tommies, playing without injured All-American RB candidate Jake Barkley, gained 588 yards of offense and improved to 3-0 in the conference and 3-2 on the season.

Concordia-Moorhead College quarterback Ryan Hebrink (Junior, Sacred Heart, Minn./Renville County West HS) rushed for two touchdowns and threw for two more in Concordia's 40-7 win over Hamline. He accounted for four of Concordia's five touchdowns on the day. Hebrink had touchdown runs of 15 and 54 yards as he ran for 132 total yards. His touchdown passes of 43 and 10 yards were part of his 205 total passing yards on the day, as he completed 11-of-19 with none picked off. As an offensive unit, Hebrink led the Cobbers to 443 total yards of offense. It is second highest output of the season for Concordia's offense. The Cobbers remained unbeaten in the MIAC at 4-0.

Defensive

Saint John's University defensive back Jason Pflipsen (Senior, Sartell, Minn.) had 13 total tackles, 11 solo tackles, two passes defended, a forced fumble and an interception in a 20-7 win at Gustavus that ran the Johnnies' MIAC win streak to 11. Pflipsen's interception came in the second quarter with SJU leading 14-7 and Gustavus entering Johnnie territory. Pflipsen forced a fumble on Gustavus' final drive of the game to seal the victory. On the season, Pflipsen now 30 total tackles and a MIAC-leading five interceptions. SJU is 4-1 overall and 3-0 in the MIAC.

Special Teams

Concordia-Moorhead College return specialist Bobby Clark (Junior, Seeley Lake, Mont./Seeley-Swan HS) amassed 105 yards on five punt returns, including a 70-yard touchdown -- his first TD of the season -- in Concordia's 40-7 win over Hamline. The Cobbers remained unbeaten in the MIAC at 4-0.

September 30, 2002

Offensive

Saint John's University junior wide receiver Blake Elliott (Melrose, Minn.) caught 13 passes for 180 yards and two touchdowns in Saturday's 59-20 win over St. Olaf in Collegeville. Elliott caught touchdown passes of four and 19 yards as the Johnnies rebounded from an early deficits of 13-0 and 21-13 to run their MIAC winning streak to 10. On the season, Elliott has 40 catches for 520 yards and seven touchdowns and he now has a remarkable 41 career TDs with parts of two seasons left. SJU is 3-1 overall and 2-0 in the MIAC.

Defensive

Saint John's University junior linebacker Cam McCambridge (Edina, Minn.) had 15 total tackles, including nine solos, in Saturday's 59-20 win over St. Olaf in Collegeville. McCambridge also had two tackles for loss as the Johnnies held St. Olaf to 190 yards total offense and avenged their lone 2001 MIAC defeat. On the season, McCambridge currently leads SJU with 34 total tackles. SJU is 3-1 overall and 2-0 in the MIAC.

Special Teams

Gustavus Adolphus College senior wide receiver Ryan Hoag (Minneapolis, Minn./Washburn HS) blocked a punt -- his second blocked kick of the season -- to help the Gusties post a 41-14 road victory at Augsburg. An NFL prospect at wide receiver, the speedy Hoag also caught five passes for 119 yards and three touchdowns. Through four games this season, Hoag has made 21 catches for 287 yards and seven touchdowns. Gustavus is 3-1 overall and 2-1 in the MIAC.

September 23, 2002

Co-Offensive

Augsburg College quarterback Dave Fransen (Sr., Farmington, Minn.), became the first Auggie ever to throw for more than 400 yards in a single game and set two single-game school records in Augsburg's 23-21 loss at St. Olaf on Saturday. Against the Oles, he completed 34 of 53 passes for 405 yards and two touchdowns. His 405 yards broke the old single-game record of 398, set by current assistant coach Derrin Lamker in a 1997 game against Concordia-Moorhead. Fransen's 34 completions broke Lamker's school record of 31, set in a 1997 game against Hamline. Augsburg rallied from a 10-0 halftime deficit to take a 14-10 lead into the fourth quarter. Fransen threw a 23-yard TD strike in the third quarter and another one in the closing minutes, as the Auggies attempted to rally back for the win.

Gusavus Adolphus College runningback Andy Traetow (Senior, Jackson, Minn.) rushed for 210 yards on 18 carries and scored two touchdowns as Gustavus defeated Carleton 48-14 in St. Peter. Traetow got the Gusties off to a fast start as he broke free for a 50-yard touchdown run on the second play of the game to give Gustavus a 6-0 lead. His other touchdown run was a two-yard scamper late in the third quarter. Traetow broke free for runs of 50-, 43-, 26-, 15-, 11-, and 10-yards in the contest. It was the second time in his career that he has rushed for over 200 yards in a game. He has now rushed for 399 yards on 55 carries through three games this season.

Defensive

Concordia-Moorhead College cornerback Josh Vickerman (Junior, Alexandria, Minn./Jefferson HS) collected two interceptions and helped lead the Cobber defense in their 35-14 win at Bethel. Vickerman also had four tackles in the game, two for a loss and caused one fumble. In the secondary, besides his two interceptions, he had three pass break-ups. On the day, Concordia's defense caused eight turnovers, and limited the Royals to only 45 yards of rushing. They also held Bethel to less than 250 total yards of offense. It is the second straight week that the Cobbers have held a high-scoring offense to only 14 points and under 300 yards of total offense.

Special Teams

Hamline University strong safety Chad Strehlo (Senior, 6-0, 207, Maplewood, Minn./Tartan HS) had a great week returning kicks for the Pipers. Strehlo returned three punts for 88 yards, including a 75-yard punt return for a touchdown in the Pipers 41-7 loss to St. Thomas. Strehlo also returned two kickoffs for 27 yards.

September 16, 2002

Offensive

University of St. Thomas running back Jake Barkley (senior, Plymouth, Minn./Robbinsdale Armstrong HS) broke a UST single-game record with five touchdowns in the Tommies' 49-25 win over 2001 co-champion Bethel. Barkley had TD runs of 56, 14 and 5 yards in the first half as the Tommies built a 35-6 halftime lead. He added scores of 32 and 2 yards in the third period and finished with 243 yards on 30 rushes in playing just the first three quarters. Barkley has 400 yards on 49 carries this season and has 3,535 career yards in 30 games, fourth most in MIAC history. He needs 190 yards to pass St. Thomas all-time leader Gary Trettel, and 399 yards to pass MIAC career leader Tim Schmitz of Saint John's (3,933 from 1974-77). Barkley has seven TDs this season and 28 on his career. It was his third career 200-yard game and 17th time in his 30 career games he's broken 100 yards.

Defensive

University of St. Thomas defensive end Sean O'Leary (senior, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis./Lincoln HS) had three sacks and two other tackles for loss among his eight tackles, plus two pass break-ups in the Tommies' 49-25 win over 2001 MIAC co-champion Bethel. O'Leary now has 22 career sacks in 22 games as a starter and needs one sack to become the Tommies' career leader. He led a Tommie defense that recorded five sacks and allowed just six points over the first two and one-half quarters.

Special Teams

Saint John's University punt returner Blake Elliott (Junior, Melrose, Minn.) returned three punts for 98 yards, including an 86 yard return for a touchdown in a 56-0 win over Hamline on Saturday in Collegeville. The 86-yard punt return was the third longest in school history. Elliott also caught six passes for 92 yards and two touchdowns as the Johnnies shutout the Pipers for the third year in a row.

September 9, 2002

Offensive

St. Olaf College quarterback Brian Senske (Junior, Apple Valley, Minn.) threw four touchdown passes while completing 13-of-14 for 212 yards to lead the Oles to a 57-14 road win Saturday at Carroll (Wis.) College. The win gave Chris Meidt a victory in his head coaching debut with the Oles. Senske threw three TD passes to lead St. Olaf to a 31-0 halftime lead, then threw a fourth TD pass in the first 32 seconds of the third quarter.

Defensive

Gustavus Adolphus College defensive back Greg Baldus (Junior, Victoria, Minn./Chaska HS) intercepted two passes, including one he returned 43 yards for a touchdown, to help the Gusties defeat Alma College 35-6 on Saturday in St. Peter. Baldus came up with two key plays as the Gustaus defense shut down the highly touted Alma offense. In the first half, Baldus wrestled the ball away from an Alma wide receiver in mid-air stopping a drive at the Gustavus 12-yard line. In the second half, Baldus intercepted a pass and returned it 43 yards for a touchdown giving the Gusties a 28-3 lead. Baldus and the Gustavus defense forced six turnovers and held the high scoring Alma offense (35.6 ppg) without a touchdown in the contest.

Special Teams

University of St. Thomas kicker Andy Clark (Junior, Anoka, Minn.) made all five placement kicks in Tommies 35-31 loss to St. Norbert (Wis.) College. His career-long 33-yard field goal gave the Toms a 10-0 lead, and he was 4-for-4 in PAT kicks. Clark is now 30-of-32 on career PATs and 3-of-6 on career FGs.