

NEEDS Improvement

After three games, Matt Ticich hasn't performed much better than Jonathan Duffy did after Week 3 of the 2005 season.

Player	Comp.	Att.	Yds	Pct.	INT	TD	RUSH	RUSH YDS
Duffy	12	23	152	52.2	1	0	10	3
Duffy	16	29	183	55.2	1	3	16	35
Duffy	20	49	174	40.8	1	0	12	-2
Total	48	101	509	47.5	3	3	38	36
Ticich	19	45	202	42.2	2	2	15	51
Ticich	20	37	179	54.0	0	0	10	35
Ticich	12	33	122	36.4	1	1	19	56
Total	51	115	503	44.3	3	3	44	142

Reported by Conor Nicholl Design by Lindsay Koski/Index

Bulldogs lose Hickory Stick

Offense sputters in second half en route to fifth straight loss against Northwest Missouri State University

Joe Barker

Assistant Sports Editor

It was not how the Bulldogs wanted the second half to start.

On the first offensive play of the half, sophomore quarterback Matt Ticich was forced out of the pocket by the Northwest Missouri State University pass rush. He scrambled to his right and was intercepted by the Bearcats linebacker Jared Erspamer.

Three plays later, Northwest's running back Xavier Omon scored to put the Bearcats up 21-10.

On the ensuing possession, Ticich tried again to mount the comeback with his arm, this time trying to find wideopen junior tight end Ryan King. The ball hit King on the hands and fell to the ground for an incomplete negating a possible 60-yard gain.

"Those two back-to-back series hurt our momentum," head coach Shannon Currier said.

The No. 2 ranked Northwest Bearcats tacked on 10 more points in the second half, taking the game 31-10. The win was the Bearcats' fifth straight win against the Bulldogs in the Hickory Stick Game, Div. II's longest running trophy game.

With the loss, the 'Dogs dropped to 0-3 on the season and 0-1 in conference play.

"We just weren't able to take advantage of opportunities that were presented to us at certain times," Currier said.

The 'Dogs had their worst offensive game of the season scoring just 10 points, passing for 125 yards and rushing for 101 — all season lows. Each of those numbers have fallen each week since the season opening loss to Minnesota State-Mankato University. Of the team's 226 total yards, 24 came in the second half.

"First half, we started off strong, we were moving the ball," freshman wide receiver Vanness Emokpae said. "In the second half, we came out and couldn't move it as well."

Ticich had his third straight sub-par game passing. He finished 12-for-33 for 122 yards and an interception. It was the second game this season when Ticich

completed less than 50 percent of his passes.

Currier said Ticich's completion percentage will go up if everyone does their job.

"We need consistent protection," Currier said. "Two, he's got to stay in the pocket at times and three, our receivers have to get open — sometimes they are not open. ... It's a combination of those things that we need to keep working on."

Ticich did manage to do some damage with his legs. He was the team's leading rusher with 19 carries for 79 net yards, the bulk of those coming in the first half. Twelve of those yards were on the 'Dogs' lone touch-down.

The rushing duo of freshman Phil Kenney and junior Jake Cunningham combined for 11 carries and 51 yards — well behind their average of 28.5 carries and 71.25 yards.

All the running backs' 51 yards came in the first half. Only Cunningham carried the ball in the second half — a rush for no gain.

Currier said the lack of offensive production limited the running game.

"Looking back, we would have liked to run the ball more," Currier said. "Being in second and long and third and long, we weren't producing enough first downs, enough plays, [which] led to us not running the ball."

The defense didn't fare well against the Bearcats either. Northwest rolled up 468 yards of total offense, including 159 yards by Omon.

"We just got to be consistent," Currier said. "We just got to make sure we are lining up right and executing properly."

Northwest wide receiver Kendall Wright was the biggest problem for the Bulldogs. The 5-foot-10-inch wideout burned the 'Dogs with 177 yards receiving and 40 yards on the ground. Wright had five of the team's eight plays longer than 20 yards.

"We played average," junior defensive back Chandler Terry said. "We gave up too many big plays."

The game was not all bad for the defense. Junior defensive back Jesse Cooper had a team high 12 tackles and his secondary mate, junior James Thabuteau intercepted, Northwest quarterback Josh Matthews in the second quarter to set up the lone touchdown. The interception was the first against Matthews all season.

Freshman kicker Mickey Masucci had another



Adam Kabins/Index

Junior James Thabuteau gets over Northwest wide receiver Abe Qaoud during the second quarter of Saturday's game at Stokes Stadium. Thabuteau picked off the pass to set up a Bulldog touchdown.

rough day on field goals. For the second time this season, he missed two out of three field goal attempts. His first kick was blocked, but Currier said it was Masucci's fault.

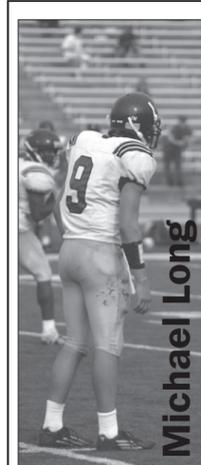
"That was a low kick," Currier said. "That blocks on him, that's too low of a kick."

For the season, Masucci has made only half of his eight field goal attempts.

"I wish there was a simple answer, but he's a true freshman trying to figure it out," Currier said.

Next up for the Bulldogs is the University of Central Missouri on Saturday at Stokes Stadium. Like the 'Dogs, UCM lost their conference opener last week.

Sept. 16 vs. Northwest Missouri State					
Site: Kirksville Mo., Stadium: Stokes Stadium					
Score by Quarters	1	2	3	4	Score
Northwest Missouri	14	0	10	7	-31
Truman	3	7	0	0	-10
First Downs	NWMSU		TSU		
Rushes-Yards	21	45-187		16	31-101
PASSING YDS (NET)	281	125			
Passes Att-Comp-Int	31-17-1	35-13-1			
Total Offense Plays-Yards	76-468	66-226			
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0			
Punt Returns-Yards	5-51	0-0			
Kickoff Returns-Yards	0-0	2-34			
Interception Returns-Yards	1-7	1-7			
Punts (Number-Avg)	5-27.2	10-36.5			
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0			
Penalties-Yards	4-35	5-30			
Possession Time	33:02	26:58			
Third-Down Conversions	5 of 14	1 of 13			
Fourth-Down Conversions	0 of 0	0 of 0			
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	4-6	2-3			
Sacks By: Number-Yards	3-14	1-8			
RUSHING: Northwest Missouri — Omon, X. 30-143; Council, L. 11-48; Osborn, J. 1-minus 2; Mathews, J. 3-minus 2. Truman — Ticich, M. 19-56; Cunningham, J. 6-40; Kenney, P. 5-7; Bembry, M. 1-minus 2.					
PASSING: Northwest Missouri — Mathews, J. 17-29-1-281; Osborn, J. 0-2-0-0. Truman — Ticich, M. 12-33-1-122; Duffy, J. 1-2-0-3.					
RECEIVING: Northwest Missouri — Wright, K. 9-177; Falkner, E.J. 3-18; Robinson, R. 2-44; Peterson, M. 2-37; Omon, X. 1-5. Truman — King, R. 3-29; Cunningham, J. 3-14; Amundson, J. 2-31; Perry, J. 2-19; Bonner, R. 2-17; Emokpae, V. 1-15.					
INTERCEPTIONS: Northwest Missouri — Erspamer, J. 1-7. Truman — Thabuteau, J. 1-7.					
FUMBLES: Northwest Missouri — Mathews, J. 1-1. Truman-None.					



Michael Long

Michael Long, the starting quarterback for the most of the 2005 season and the backup signal caller entering fall camp, has not fully recovered from shoulder surgery in July.

"We would ideally love to redshirt Mike [Long], but if something were to happen to Matt [Ticich], we would have to make a decision on what we would do," head football coach Shannon Currier said.

Long still practices, but is in pain after throwing. "He can throw some," Currier said. "His arm is just gaining the strength back. He throws some in practice, but the more he throws, the more tired his arm gets the following day, so he is on a rehab program to try and make the progress that he is trying to make."

Long's injury was from overuse throughout the years. "He has had it through high school and battled through it, it didn't get any better after some rest and decided that he was then going to have get it fixed. ... He is not quite to full speed like we want [him] to be," Currier said.

The team can redshirt Long if he doesn't play this year.

Standing on crutches and wearing a walking boot Tuesday afternoon, Steven Holman forecasted his next few weeks.

"Hopefully, I'll be back by the Missouri Western game [on Sept. 30], but I think it is going to be the week after," he said.

Holman, a senior defensive lineman and one of the Bulldogs' captains, suffered a break of the fifth metatarsal in his left foot in one of the first plays of the season against Minnesota-State Mankato in Week 1.

This week he continues his cardio work that includes riding a stationary bike. Sophomores Courtney Jordan and Les Hammers started as defensive ends and senior Josh Terrain anchored the middle in the 3-4 defense last week-end against Northwest Missouri State University and will take the field again Saturday against Central Missouri State University.



Steven Holman

Reported by Conor Nicholl, Design by Lindsay Koski/Index

White scores first career try, Bullets split home games

Ben Yarnell

Staff Reporter

Senior back Lauren White enjoyed a terrific moment early in the opening match of her rugby career.

Facing Washington University, White scored a try the first time she touched the ball.

"Basically, I was just kind of in the right place at the right time," White said. "It was really exciting because there was a lot of adrenaline running through people."

Along with White's try, the Bullets racked up four other tries to out-score Washington 29-7. The team was defeated Lafayette West 42-5 on Saturday.

Senior player-coach Natalie Gerhart said the team performed well in the first game of the double-header.

"I was really impressed with how everyone played," Gerhart said. "Rookies have only been playing a week, and they really stepped it up."

Gerhart had a try and two completed kicks for nine points.

"I was happy with how well we could put the things we practiced into play," Gerhart said. "Obviously we haven't practiced everything we wanted to go over in the season, especially with rookies, but what we did teach them they were doing pretty well."

She also said she understood how tough the game was for Washington.

"They have trouble like we do, with people at their school being

too busy to be able to commit to three practices a week," Gerhart said. "They're showing progress, though."

The second game of the doubleheader was much more difficult for the Bullets. They played the West Lafayette Trojans, made up of students from Purdue University (Ind.), and lost 42-5.

The Bullets just were not ready for what the Trojans brought with them, Gerhart said.

"I really felt like the only way they beat us was on the outside, by sucking us into the middle," Gerhart said. "We just haven't worked on that style of defense yet."

She pointed out, however, that the Bullets' one try against the Trojans was particularly sweet.

"Their coach told us that they had played three games so far this season, and we were the first team to have scored against them, so that's good," Gerhart said.

The Trojans had a full-time coach, which Gerhart said always helps.

"That would be a huge advantage," Gerhart said. "If we could have one person totally dedicated to teaching us how to play instead of someone who has played for three years, like myself, trying to teach people who have never played."

"I was really impressed with how everyone played. Rookies have only been playing a week, and they really stepped it up."

Natalie Gerhart

Senior Player-Coach

The Truman women will play a doubleheader against Benedictine University in Atchison, Kan., on Saturday. Later, they'll meet up with a club team, the Kansas City Jazz.

Gerhart said the two games could get interesting. This is the second season for Benedictine, and Gerhart said she thinks they might have difficulty fielding an entire team. She said the same might be true for the Kansas City team.

"We will try to play a full Benedictine side first, or as many of them as we can for the first two halves," Gerhart said. "For the third half, we may give them some subs and it will be more like a scrimmage [during that second game]."

After the doubleheader, the women will go to Kansas City for a motley with the Kansas City Jazz, the club team that put on a clinic for the Bullets two weeks ago. Gerhart explained that a motley is an event where the teams mix and play each other.

Freshman back Kelsey McFarland said the event sounds like fun, but makes her a little nervous at the same time.

"I don't know what I'm doing, and I'm going to be playing with women who have several years of experience under their belt," McFarland said.

However, McFarland and 11 of her Bullet teammates will play on the Heart of America Under-23 Select Side, an All-Star team composed of women who tried out at the clinic two weeks ago.

Gerhart said this is huge for the Bullets.

"That's really, really exciting for our team," Gerhart said. "I was glad to see so many of our people on that team finally."