Carleton Football Report - Week Nine

CARLETON, GUSTAVUS MEET AS BOTH IN NEED OF WIN

Carleton College plays its final road game of the season when the Knights travel to St. Peter, Minn., to face Gustavus Adolphus College. Both the Knights and Gusties have one MIAC win on the season and would like to stay out of the bottom of the MIAC standings. The Knights have won three of five road contests this season, but are coming off their first shutout loss of the season at Bethel University last week. The Gusties, meanwhile, led 14-7 at halftime against the University of St. Thomas before the Tommies tallied three third-quarter scores in a three-minute span to win, 35-14.

FOSS, MUELLERLEILE INTO ALL-TIME TOP TEN IN TACKLES

Junior Randy Foss (Hastings, Minn.) tallied a team-high 13 tackles in Saturday’s loss at Bethel, leaving his career total at 263. He ranks 10th on Carleton’s all-time list in the category. He ranks sixth in the MIAC in tackles per game at 9.0. Luke Muellerleile’s (White Bear Lake, Minn./Mahtomedi) 275 tackles ranks him ninth on Carleton’s all-time list. Muellerleile is expected to make his 39th career start against Gustavus as he tries to become one of 10 Carleton players to start 40 games in a career.

KOOTSIKAS INTO TOP 10 IN RECECTIONS, NEARING IN YARDAGE

Junior wide receiver Mike Kootsiakas (Rosemount, Minn.) had three catches for 29 yards in Saturday’s loss to Bethel. He is the 14th Carleton player to record 1,000 yards receiving in a career. He is 135 yards shy of moving into Carleton’s all-time top 10 in receiving yards. His 78 receptions ranks four away from eighth on Carleton’s all-time receptions list.

SOPHOMORE PHELPS BECOMING A FORCE

Sophomore linebacker Jerad Phelps (Northfield, Minn.) continues to post a break-out season. After tallying nine tackles in his rookie season, Phelps is second on the squad with 67 tackles. His 12 tackles against Bethel matched his career high and marked the third time in eight games this season he’s tallied double-digits in tackles. He ranks ninth in the MIAC with 8.4 tackles per game and is one of only two non-juniors or seniors to rank in the top 10.

DEFENDERS ARE ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICA® NOMINEES

Foss and senior Luke Muellerleile (White Bear Lake, Minn.) are Carleton’s two nominees for the ESPN The Magazine/CoSIDA Academic All-America® team. Foss carries a 3.77 grade-point average in Spanish/Pre-Med and Muellerleile is a 3.49 student in economics.

BREAKOUT GAME FOR ROOKIE RECEIVING

Rookie wide receiver Chris Gardner (Gaylord, Minn./Sibley East) had two of his biggest plays of the season in Saturday’s contest against Bethel. He returned a kickoff 65 yards and added his longest reception of the year (12 yards). He ended the day with a career-high 122 all-purpose yards to lead the Knights.

BROKKE BREAKIN’ THINGS UP

Junior cornerback Nick Brokke (Roseville, Minn.) currently ranks first in the MIAC in passes defensed with 1.62/game. That number places him 16th rationally as well. He
has four interceptions on the season, having picked off two passes against both Augsburg and Macalester. His 12 interceptions ranks fifth on Carleton’s all-time list.

Brokke was named as one of three Division III national defensive players of the week by Don Hansen’s Football Gazette on Oct. 4. Brokke tallied two interceptions and a forced fumble in the Knights’ win over Augsburg. He was also named the MIAC’s defensive player of the week.

**JACKSON SETS NEW SCHOOL RECORD**

Sophomore R.J. Jackson (Roseville, Minn./De La Salle) rushed nine times for 112 yards and two touchdowns in the Oct. 15 victory over Macalester College. The 12.4 yards-per-carry average set a new single-game Carleton record, breaking the old mark of 12.3 yards-per-carry set by Adam Henry ’94, also set against Macalester in 1990. Jackson had a 74-yard touchdown scamper, a new career long for the fleet sophomore. He also returned a punt 41 yards for a touchdown, his first career punt return for a score. He’s scored four special teams touchdowns in 17 career games.

**CASPER MOVES UP PASSING CHART**

Junior quarterback Darren Caspers (Bemidji, Minn.) threw for 43 yards in Saturday’s loss, leaving his career passing yardage total at 2,811 yards. That puts him alone in seventh on Carleton’s all-time list, but he needs 1,037 yards to move past Tim Nielson ’89 for sixth on the all-time list. He needs one more touchdown pass to go onto the all-time top 10 list in that category. He ranks sixth all-time with 268 career completions.

**THOMPSON NEARS TOP 10 IN RUSHING SCORES**

Junior Wade Thompson (Peterson, Minn./Rushford-Peterson) scored his 12th career rushing touchdown against St. Thomas on Oct. 22, moving him two touchdowns away from Carleton’s all-time top 10. Three players are tied for eighth on the rushing touchdown list with 12 scores.

**KNIGHTS STAGE SACK ATTACK AGAINST SCOTS**

Carleton notched nine sacks against Macalester, led by Pat Frey’s (Jr./Wilmette, Ill./Ann Arbor-Huron, Mich.) three sacks among his eight tackles against Macalester. It is the most sacks recorded in a single game by a Knight player since 1999 and is tied for the third-most in a single game in Carleton football history. Carleton held Macalester to -2 rushing yards in the win, using those nine sacks for 57 yards to hold down the Scots’ ground attack. Seven different players recorded sacks for the Knights.

**JACKSON, THOMPSON REACH HISTORIC MILESTONE TOGETHER**

Sophomore R.J. Jackson and junior Wade Thompson have both surpassed 1,000 career rushing yards this season. Jackson moved past the milestone with 79 yards in the Oct. 1 victory over Augsburg while Thompson’s 52 yards against St. Olaf on Oct. 8 pushed him past the 1,000-yard mark. The pair are the 16th and 17th, respectively, to pass the milestone. It is the first time in Carleton football history that two teammates have reached 1,000 career rushing yards in the same season.

**JACKSON SECOND IN MIAC IN ALL-PURPOSE YARDS, THIRD IN RUSHING**

Carleton sophomore R.J. Jackson, despite only 13 yards rushing and 53 all-purpose yards against Bethel, is second in the MIAC in all-purpose yards with 148.0 yards per game and third in the MIAC rushing rankings with 76.9 yards per game. He is ranked 35th in Division III in all-purpose yards per game. His eight touchdowns scored is the fifth-most among any MIAC player and he ranks sixth overall with 6.8 points per game. Jackson is perhaps the most dangerous returner in the conference. He would lead the league in punt returns (35.8 yards/return) and kick returns (30.1 yards/return) if he had enough attempts.

He returned his first punt for a touchdown against Macalester on Oct. 15 and returned his third career kickoff for a touchdown in the Sept. 24 loss to Concordia-Moorhead.

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**BY THE NUMBERS**

- First-year players starting for the first time against Gustavus, as wide receiver Chris Gardner and defensive back Drew Ziller are slated to start.

- Combined tackles by seniors Nick Brokke and Luke Muellerleile and junior Randy Foss. Muellerleile and Foss both rank in Carleton’s all-time top 10 in tackles.

- Consecutive games that Carleton had gone without being shut out. That streak ended last week when Bethel held Carleton scoreless.

- Seasons since the Knights finished 5-5 or better. Carleton needs to win its final two games to finish with its best record since the 1996 team was 6-4.

- Number of combined penalties by Carleton and Gustavus. The total would still rank ahead of St. Olaf, the MIAC’s most penalized team with 72 in 660 penalty yards.

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**MIAC STANDINGS**

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<tr>
<th>Team</th>
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**Games This Week**

- Bethel vs. Augsburg at Metrodome, 3 p.m. (11/14)
- Carleton at Gustavus, 1 p.m.
- St. Olaf at Concordia, 1 p.m.
- St. Thomas at Hamline, 1 p.m.

**Games Last Week**

- Bethel 43, Carleton 0
- Concordia 48, Augsburg 14
- St. Thomas 35, Gustavus 14
- St. John’s 63, St. Olaf 9
- Hamline 54, Macalester 0

**Games Next Week**

- Concordia vs. UM-Morris at Fargo Dome (11/11)
- Hamline at Carleton, 1 p.m.
- Augsburg at St. Olaf, 1 p.m.
- St. John’s at St. Thomas, 1 p.m.

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**CARLETON CAREER RECEPTIONS LIST**

1. 212 - Jim Bradford (212-3719) - 1988-91
2. 182 - Steve Gorka (210-2131) - 1994-97
3. 137 - Erik Miller (135-1259) - 1997-00
4. 127 - Scott Hanks (127-1173) - 1999-02
5. 117 - Jeff Scherz (117-1175) - 1998-01
7. 99 - Mark Wolschinski (99-1250) - 1994-96
8. 84 - Dan Nienhuis (84-919) - 1992-95
9. 80 - Dan Reider (80-1163) - 1997-00
10. 78 - Mike Kotsikas (78-1056) - 2004-05
KNIGHTS RETAIN BOOK OF KNOWLEDGE

Carleton's victory on Oct. 15 over Macalester allowed the Knights to retain the Book of Knowledge for the third consecutive year. The Book of Knowledge is a traveling trophy exchanged between the two highest-ranked academic institutions in Minnesota. The trophy, started in the 1999 season, has belonged to the Knights for the past three seasons.

RUNNING BACK TANDEM DRIVES KNIGHTS

This season, Carleton has used a two-running back system to get the talents of junior Wade Thompson and sophomore R.J. Jackson on the field at the same time. So far the results are positive as the Knights are averaging 150.7 yards rushing per game despite facing the MIAC's top two rushing defenses in St. John's and Concordia. The Knights rushed for a season-best 284 yards in the season opener against Beloit (Wis.), added 216 yards against St. Olaf and 199 yards against Macalester. The Knights rank sixth in the MIAC in rushing yardage per game and face the Gusties' run defense that ranks sixth in the MIAC, allowing 143.2 yards per contest.

MUELLERLEILE CONTINUES QUEST FOR 40-YARD SEASON AVERAGE

Carleton punter Luke Muellerleile had his worst punting day of the season against Bethel, averaging only 32.9 yards per kick on seven attempts, with none of the seven tries going more than 39 yards. That left his season average at 39.2 yards per punt. He is trying to become the first Carleton punter to average more than 40 yards per attempt in a single season. He set the Carleton single-season punting average record last year at 38.2 yards per punt.

Against St. Olaf on Oct. 8 he averaged 45.5 yards per punt on four attempts, the second-best single-game average in school history. Only Andy Quist's 46.3 yards-per-punt average in an Oct. 16, 1999, game with the University of St. Thomas was better in the Carleton record book. This season Muellerleile has notched two of the top three single-game punting averages in school history.

He is one of only three MIAC punters to rank in Division III's top 20, as Augsburg College's Nick Schliemeier is sixth in the nation at 42.1 yards per attempt and St. Olaf's Paul Forthmann is 20th at 39.8 yards per attempt. Muellerleile is ranked 23rd overall. He is Carleton's career leader with 205 punt attempts and 7,439 punt yardage. He enters Saturday's contest with a 36.3 yards-per-punt career average. The Carleton career record, held by Neil Volker '93, is 35.7 yards per attempt.

LARGEST ROSTER SINCE WORLD WAR II FOR KNIGHTS

This season's roster is the largest at Carleton since 1948, the year after World War II ended and all the men returned home from the war fronts to college. Of these 82 players, 40 are returning letterwinners and 24 have started at least part-time. Thirty-three are first-year players, which is believed to be the largest recruiting class in Carleton history.

CASPERS REACHES MILESTONE IN TOTAL OFFENSE

Junior Darren Caspers tallied 59 yards passing and 12 yards rushing in limited action in the Oct. 15 win at Macalester. The totals left him with exactly 3,000 yards of total offense for his career. He is only the eighth Carleton player to reach that milestone. He topped on 47 yards of total offense last week, leaving his career total at 3,187 yards and 267 yards shy of passing Adam Henry '94 for seventh on Carleton's all-time list.

LAST TIME: GUSTAVUS 40, AT CARLETON 27, NOV. 6, 2004

Darren Caspers threw for 311 yards and two touchdowns and completed a school-record 30 passes, Mike Kootsikas caught 10 balls for 136 yards and R.J. Jackson rolled up 105 yards and scored twice in his first career start, but visiting Gustavus turned four Carleton turnovers into 24 points in beating the Knights, 40-27.

Carleton took a quick 13-0 lead but the Gusties turned three Carleton second-quarter turnovers into 21 points to lead 31-13 at the half. Gustie quarterback Jordan Stolp was 21-for-39 for 309 yards and three touchdowns.

The Knights broke to an early two-touchdown lead. James Cobben (Rushford, Minn./Rushford-Peterson) intercepted his first career pass, returning it to the Gustie 24-yard line. Jackson bowled in from four yards out for his first career rushing touchdown.
Kootsikas hauled in a six-yard fade pass from Caspers with 4:29 left in the first, capping a 12-play, 87-yard drive.

The Gusties turned the tide late in the first, as Stolp booted his first career field goal, a 26-yard effort. Isaac Siebling picked off a Caspers' pass and returned it to the 25-yard line of Carleton. On what proved to be a key play, the Gusties converted a fourth-and-eight play from Carleton's 28-yard line, scoring on a Mitch Anderson five-yard burst on the next play, making the score 13-10 in favor of the Knights.

The Gusties were far from done in the stanza. Loren Havermeier returned a punt 25 yards to Carleton's 48-yard line and the visitors scored three plays later, as Stolp hit Sean Smith from 18 yards out, giving the Gusties the lead, 17-16. Tyler Rinquist forced a Carleton fumble on the next possession, Isaac Siebling recovered and the Gusties scored nine plays later as Smith and Stolp hooked up again, this time from two yards out. Carleton's next play from scrimmage, snapped the ball over Caspers' head and Adam Miron recovered it and rolled 15 yards into the end zone to cap a wild second quarter.

Stolp's 27-yard field goal was the lone scoring in the third. Seemingly down-and-out, Carleton rallied in the fourth. Jackson's five-yard burst capped a quick 2:42 drive for Carleton, getting the hosts within 34-20. The defense got a stop on fourth-and-one at their own 30-yard line and Caspers and company promptly drove the 76 yards in 11 plays, as Ben Coopdan (DeKalb, Ill.) hauled in a nine-yard scoring toss from Caspers to make it 34-27. Carleton, needing a stop to have a chance at a final drive, instead allowed the Gusties to score as Kerry Zajicek caught a 23-yard pass on fourth down from Stolp.

Isaac Siebling led all players with 17 stops and added three sacks, a fumble recovery and the interception for Gustavus. Dan Karlgaard's '05 10 stops paced Carleton.

JOINTINGS

Despite Saturday's loss, Carleton can still finish with its best record since the Knights finished 6-4 in 1996. Wins at Gustavus and home against Hamline would allow Carleton to finish 8-5, 3-5 in the conference.... Carleton was shut out for the first time in 22 games. St. John's was the last team to shut out the Knights, 44-0 on Oct. 11, 2003.... After committing only eight turnovers in their first four games, the Knights have turned the ball over 14 times in their last four games.... Sophomore linebacker Eric Paul (Lake Forest, Ill.) blocked a Bethel punt early in the third quarter, which was recovered by first-year player Ty Thorsen (Moorhead, Minn.). Thorsen returned it 14 yards to the Bethel 36-yard line, nearly returning it all the way for a score-- Drew Ziller (Fy./Byron, Minn./Rosecrans Lourdes), seeing his first significant action of the season, tallied eight tackles and one pass break up against St. Thomas two weeks ago-- Rookie wide-out Matt Frank (Caledonia, Minn.) tallied seven catches for 88 yards and one touchdown in his first game against arch rival St. Olaf. The first-year player had four of his seven catches on the final drive of the first half, as his 20-yard TD grab put the Knights within a pair of scores right before halftime.... Ten different Knights had receptions against St. Olaf, a season high.... Carleton rushed for 216 yards against St. Olaf, its highest total of the season against a MIAC foe.... Carleton is the second least penalized team in the MIAC, having committed 28 penalties in eight contests. It did commit a season-high six infractions against St. Thomas. By contrast, St. Olaf, the most penalized team in the MIAC, has been flagged for 72 infractions in eight games, 55 more penalties per game than Carleton.

TRIO OF DEFENDERS IN 200-TACKLE CLUB

Seniors Luke Muellerleile and Nick Broke and junior Randy Foss have all tallied 200 tackles for their career. Muellerleile plays the group with 275 stops, followed by Foss at 263 and Broke at 243. Foss has added 12 career interceptions, while Muellerleile has six picks.
RUN GAME IMPROVED UNDER BRANN

Since Chris Brann’s arrival at Carleton, the Knights have made significant strides in their rushing attack. They rolled up 284 yards rushing in the win over Beloit (Wis.) in week one, added 216 yards in the loss to St. Olaf and barely missed their third 200-yard game as the Knights rolled up 199 yards against Macalester last week. They have surpassed the 200-yard mark as a team in four of their last 11 games and nine times since the start of the 2003 season, a span of 26 games.

ASSISTANT JEPPSON INTO STATE BASEBALL HALL OF FAME

Carleton assistant coach Neal Jeppson, the former head baseball coach at Burnsville High School and the Knights’ offensive line coach, was inducted in the Minnesota High School Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame last Saturday. Joining Jeppson in the year’s induction class was Dean Bowyer (Minnesota State University, Mankato), Dennis Denning (Cretin-Derham Hall, now at University of St. Thomas), Dean Jaacks (Windom), Jim Luther (Edina), Lowell Searcy (Brainerd), Dale Welter (Chaska) and Max West (Brownie). Jeppson retired from teaching at Burnsville high school in 2003 where he was the head baseball coach from 1974-2002. While at Burnsville, Jeppson was also an assistant football coach for the Blaze. A 1966 graduate of Concordia Moorhead, he earned his master’s degree at South Dakota State University in 1971.

KNIGHTS’ FOOTBALL LIVE ON AIR, OVER INTERNET

For the second consecutive season, all 10 Carleton football games will be broadcast live on KQCL 95.9 FM/Power 96 out of Faribault, Minn. Award-winning sports director Gordy Kosfeld will be on the call in his second season as the voice of the Knights. Additionally, all the games will be carried live via the internet with Carleton’s internet broadcast partner, Stretch Internet. Listeners can log on to Knights Online at www.carleton.edu/athletics and click on broadcasts to listen to Carleton football from anywhere in the world. The games are also archived on Knights Online for fans’ listening pleasure after the game. [Note: This week’s game will be available online only, as KQCL has a conflict with Minnesota high school football playoffs.]

KNIGHTS END SEASON AT HOME

Carleton ends its 2005 campaign by hosting Hamline University on Saturday, Nov. 12 at 1 p.m. at Laird Stadium. It will be Senior Day and Family Day, as the Knights will honor their seniors in pregame ceremonies and the players’ parents at half time. The Knights have beaten the Pipers in each of the last two meetings. The game can be heard live on Knights Online (www.carleton.edu/athletics/broadcasts/).