

Blackhawk victory marred by brawl

A bench-clearing fight marred the Iowa Blackhawks' 70-41 victory over the Missouri Minutemen Saturday evening in American Professional Football League action at the Mathewson Exhibition Center.

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SEDALIA, Mo. - A bench-clearing fight marred the Iowa Blackhawks' 70-41 victory over the Missouri Minutemen Saturday evening in American Professional Football League action at the Mathewson Exhibition Center.

With 1:09 remaining in the first half and Iowa leading 42-28, Missouri running back Jason Rice was tackled along the wall at the Iowa 6-yard line. The wall broke, with Rice and two Iowa defenders tumbling out of the playing field.

Missouri wide receiver Bob Knust came to Rice's aid, and a fight broke out between Knust and the Blackhawk defenders. Knust's brother, Missouri quarterback John Knust, joined the fight, followed by the entire Missouri bench.

"I thought they tackled me," said Rice. "They had me down, and the next thing you know, here they come."

Several Blackhawks ran from the bench to join the melee, which included fans launching their beverages into the ruckus.

It took the intervention of APFL Commissioner Darcy Childs to end the fight.

"(The fight) was the worst I've been around," Childs said. "When the wall crashed through, there were a lot of things that people didn't see.

"Everything else was kind of a snowball effect."

After things were settled, the referees announced the ejections of John Knust, Bob Knust, Iowa's Tyrice Ellebb, who threw a helmet during the brawl, and Iowa linebacker Demetrius Richards. Kurt Ferguson also got ejected in the second half for unsportsmanlike conduct.

"That's not the type of organization we want to be," said Iowa coach Mike Wolff. "There was extracurricular stuff on both sides of the ball. I don't want our organization to be portrayed in that light and I let them know that."

The loss of John Knust pressed wide receiver Andre Roberson into quarterback for the Minutemen.

"Losing John hurt. We lost our leader," said Missouri coach David Stalder.

On the first play after the fight, Missouri fumbled the ball, which was recovered by Iowa's Corey Sykes.

Four plays later, Corey Harold was going to attempt a field goal, but the snap was botched. Holder Ryan Kauffman took the ball, scrambled to his right, and threw the ball to the end zone, where Harold caught it for a touchdown with 12 seconds remaining in the half.

Iowa went on a 21-point run after the fight, extending the lead to 63-28.

Quarterback Chuck Wright completed 10 passes for 175 of the Blackhawks' 254 yards, including seven touchdowns. Wright also added a touchdown run for the Blackhawks' final score.

"Chuck Wright, the game that he played (was great)," said Wolff. "The kid is a phenomenal quarterback."

"(I give credit to the offensive) line, first and foremost," said Wright. "We knew coming down that Missouri would be tough.

The victory was the second in two weekends for the Blackhawks against Missouri. Iowa beat Missouri 61-28 on May 21 at the Mid-America Center.

Wolff said that he didn't change his game plan at all from the previous game.

"We mix up the run and the pass, and we use each of them to complement each other," said Wolff.

Thomas Jefferson graduate Chris Moore intercepted a pass on the game's first play from scrimmage. Fellow T.J. alum Justin Kammrad ran for two touchdowns and caught another.

George Patterson III scored two touchdowns for Iowa. Ferguson and Kauffman each caught a touchdown pass, and Eric Johnson took a kickoff return 41 yards for a touchdown during the Blackhawks' 36-point second half.

Blackhawks 13 36 14 7 - 70

Missouri 7 21 6 7 - 41