

Blackhawks crush K.C.

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Perhaps Iowa's home opener Sunday at the Mid-America Center would've been more competitive if the Blackhawks only played on defense and special teams.

The two-time American Professional Football League champions didn't need much else in their 82-6 nonleague win over the Kansas City Matadors, an outdoor team from Missouri.

Eric Johnson returned two kickoffs for touchdowns and Iowa recorded four safeties while improving to 1-1 on the season. Johnson also ran for two scores against the porous defense of the Matadors as the Blackhawks bounced back from their season-opening loss to Sioux City.

"There was a lot of open field," Johnson said. "I'm going to give all the credit to my linemen. They had something to prove after the loss last week. They made a big statement, and I just ran behind those guys."

Iowa blocked a K.C. field-goal attempt through the end zone for a safety on the game's first series, then Johnson returned the ensuing kickoff 58 yards to make it 9-0 early on.

It was all academic from there. The Blackhawks held the Matadors to only 4 total yards, including minus-59 on the ground, in their runaway victory.

K.C. also had four turnovers, three that were interceptions by Robert Walker Jr.

"This was more of a fundamental game, to be sure we execute," Blackhawk linebacker Derek Derr said. "We had some mistakes last week, and we wanted to get those corrected."

Iowa consistently put pressure on quarterback Sohail Jouya. The Blackhawks recorded four sacks, including two that went for safeties. Jouya also grounded the ball under pressure in the end zone, which resulted in another.

Backup Chad Schmigel, the franchise's quarterback of the future, threw for four scores in his Iowa debut. Starter Chuck Wright also had a pair of TD passes for the Blackhawks. Steve Rush had three scoring catches, and Mike Stuart added two in his first game of the season.

The competition Sunday wasn't at an APFL level, but Iowa still seemed to make strides.

"We're going to have to go back and take a look at the film," Iowa coach Mike Wolff said. "We'll take a look at it, see where we improved and work on areas where we're a little deficient still."

Kansas City (0-1) 0 6 0 0 - 6

Iowa (1-1) 15 30 30 7 - 82

I: Safety, FG blocked through end zone

I: Eric Johnson 58 kickoff return (Zach Kohlhoff kick)

I: Johnson 8 run (kick failed)

I: Mell Holliday 1 run (Kohlhoff kick)

I: Safety, Nate Butler sacked in end zone

I: Mike Stuart 9 pass from Chuck Wright (Kohlhoff kick)

KC: Nate Butler 7 pass from Sohail Jouya (pass failed)

I: Steve Rush 2 pass from Chad Schmigel (kick failed)

I: Safety, Jouya sacked in end zone

I: Rush 9 pass from Schmigel (Jerry Lakin kick)

I: Andrew Seymour 14 pass from Wright (Kohlhoff kick)

I: Safety, Jouya grounded ball in end zone

I: Johnson 51 kickoff return (Kohlhoff kick)

I: Johnson 18 run (Kohlhoff kick)

I: Rush 23 pass from Schmigel (Kohlhoff kick)

I: Stuart 4 pass from Schmigel (Kohlhoff kick)

Individual Statistics

RUSHING: KC, Jouya 7-(-46), Carmes 5-12, Bostic 4-(-9), Evans 3-(-1), Butler 3-(-13), Jackson 2-2, Team 1-0, Wilkerson 1-(-4). I, Holliday 7-36, Johnson 4-42, Schmigel 1-21, Stuart 1-21, Price 1-15.

PASSING: KC, Jouya 4-13-1 63, Butler 0-2-1 0, Dawson 0-1-1 0. I, Wright 5-8-0 54, Schmigel 7-13-0 76.

RECEIVING: KC, Butler 3-63, Carmes 1-0. I, Rush 4-39, Kirvin 3-46, Stuart 3-25, Seymour 2-20.