Football Crushes WNEC with Record Number of Sacks

By Thomas Kettler

Setting an Eastern Collegiate Football Conference and MIT record of 11 sacks for a loss of 78 yards, the MIT football team defeated the Western New England College Golden Bears 22-6 Saturday at Stoneham Stadium. The victory was the Beavers first of the season and put the team 1-2 overall and 1-1 in the conference.

WNEC fell to 0-3 overall.

The first quarter was uneventful as neither team could mount a serious offensive threat until the quarter's end. The only plays of note were a punt by WNEC that MIT fumbled following an 8-yard return but was nullified by an inadvertent whistle midway in the game. Also, MIT committed its only turnover at 7 minutes 23 seconds when Alex Sgouros '95 had his pass intercepted by Keith Murphy. One minute later, Andy Phelps '95 got his first sack to stall the resulting Golden Bears drive. Phelps would get 2.5 sacks and one tackle for losses with 10 tackles overall during the game and was nominated for conference defensive player of the week.

Eventually, MIT got on the scoreboard with 1:42 left in the quarter. The Beavers scored on a 24-yard screen from Sgouros to Troy Gayecki '97. On the ensuing play after, MIT faked a kick and scored on a wide-open pass play to Gayecki.

The second quarter was worse offensively than the first. However, WNEC scored its only touchdown with 9:30 left in the quarter when Steve Carroll ran off-tackle for three yards to score. However, the Golden Bears pass fell incomplete to result in a Beaver lead, 8-6. After an MIT possession that resulted in a punt, WNEC got its first down. However, their possession stalled as MIT had back-to-back sacks as first Troy Thomson '98 and Craig Yanney '97 and then Yanney by himself sacked Matt Lucarelli. Yanney would have 2.5 sacks overall all to be Phelps for second in that statistic to Brad Gray '98 who had three.

MIT’s resulting possession stalled and the Beavers punted. In the next series of WNEC down, MIT sacked Lucarelli three more times. First Yanney had his final sack of the day. Then after a Golden Bear fourth down, John Nobile '96 teamed with Phelps on one sack. Then Andy Mignani '98 sacked Lucarelli on a fourth down to stop WNEC in time expired.

In the third quarter, MIT scored its first running touchdown of the season. After WNEC initial possession stalled and the Golden Bears punted, the Beavers received the ball on the MIT 37. On the first play, Saul DeLeon '98 ran 39 yards for a series of short runs by Chris Brown '96 and DeLeon moved the ball to the WNEC 2. DeLeon was rewarded for his 79-yard effort with a 2-yard plunge for the touchdown with 9:19 left in the quarter. Ken Mills '97 converted the point-after-touchdown (PAT).

After the kickoff, the Golden Bears moved the ball to the MIT 26. However, a third down pass was knocked down by Matt Turner '96 and the resulting 45-yard field goal was short to give the Beavers the ball back. On the ensuing possession, MIT moved the ball to the WNEC 25 before its drive stalled on a batted ball by Ken Fulton. The half ended with no further action.

On the resulting possession by the Golden Bears, Brad Gray got his first sack and MIT’s seventh of the game. Gray helped stall the drive so much so that MIT took over on a 30-yard on the 50-yard line. The resulting drive was powered as with 8:56, Gayecki caught a tipped-pass in the end zone. Mills converted the PAT to conclude the scoring.

Defense dominated the final minutes of the game, especially with MIT's, 6:31-61 left in the game, allowing only one WNEC drive to force a punt. After MIT went three-and-out, the Beavers had three more sacks and a series of back-to-back sacks. First, Gray sacked Lucarelli to record the first of four in all and then Phelps had his final sack of the game at 2:29. Lastly, Mike Batville '98 had the final sack of the game to tie a WNEC record for sacks allowed.

Offensively, the Beavers had 299 overall yards while limiting the Golden Bears, Brad Gray got his first sack and MIT's seventh of the game. Gray helped stall the drive so much so that MIT took over on a 30-yard on the 50-yard line. The resulting drive was powered as with 8:56, Gayecki caught a tipped-pass in the end zone. Mills converted the PAT to conclude the scoring.

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