

## Bison shoved weary Hawkeyes out of the way

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 18 September 2016 06:01 -

---



IOWA CITY - Iowa fans should not be shocked that the Hawkeyes lost to North Dakota State on Saturday, but they should be surprised by how it happened.

The Bison totally dominated the Hawkeyes in the fourth quarter and rallied for a 23-21 victory on a 37-yard field goal by Cam Pedersen as time expired before a sellout crowd at Kinnick Stadium.

North Dakota State is the undisputed king of FCS football, winning five straight national titles, and this was the Bison's sixth straight victory over an FBS team with previous wins over Kansas, Minnesota, Colorado State, Kansas State and Iowa State.

Anyone who pays attention to college football knows that the elite teams from the FCS division (the old I-AA group) can beat teams from the FBS division (the old I-A club) on any given Saturday, so it's no shock that North Dakota State won this game.

The big surprise comes in HOW they won the ballgame.

The 13th-ranked Hawkeyes, who pride themselves on their strength and conditioning program, ran out of gas on defense in the fourth quarter as the Bison totally took control.

Here are the shocking stats from the fourth quarter:

+ North Dakota State gained 126 yards in the final stanza, compared to minus-9 yards for Iowa.

+ The Bison ran for 103 yards in the fourth period, compared to minus-14 for Iowa.

## **Bison shoved weary Hawkeyes out of the way**

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 18 September 2016 06:01 -

---

+ The Bison controlled the ball for 10 minutes, 45 seconds in the fourth period, compared to just 4:15 for Iowa.

+ The Bison collected eight first downs in the fourth period, compared to just one for Iowa.

And here is the most shocking stat of the day: The Hawkeyes, who looked so good running the ball against Miami of Ohio and Iowa State, finished with a paltry 34 yards on the ground against North Dakota State.

The Hawkeyes took a 21-14 lead in the third quarter on C.J. Beathard's 9-yard touchdown pass to Matt Vandenberg, who actually "intercepted" a ball that was intended for tight end George Little.

The rest of the game belonged to North Dakota State.

Facing a hostile crowd in Big Ten country, the Bison went on a long touchdown march that covered 15 plays, 80 yards and lasted 8 minutes and 39 seconds, an eternity in college football. The Bison knocked the tired Hawkeyes off the ball and marched right down the field, scoring on a 7-yard pass from Easton Stick to Chase Morlock to pull within 21-20 with 3:41 left in the game.

North Dakota State Coach Chris Klieman, a Northern Iowa grad and former UNI assistant, gambled and went for a 2-point conversion at that point to try and take the lead, but the conversion failed and the Hawks clung to their one-point edge.

Iowa needed to collect a pair of first downs to run out the clock, but it never happened. Leshun Daniels lost two yards on first down, he gained one yard on second down and Beathard was sacked for a 9-yard loss on third down.

## **Bison shoved weary Hawkeyes out of the way**

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 18 September 2016 06:01 -

---

The Hawkeyes had to punt and North Dakota State made a fair catch at its own 34-yard line with 1:53 remaining.

Stick ran for 29 yards on a quarterback draw to the Iowa 37-yard line on the Bison's first play, then Stick completed a 10-yard pass to the Iowa 27-yard line with plenty of time remaining. At that point, you knew the Hawks were in trouble.

Iowa faced this same situation against Northern Iowa - another talented FCS foe - back in 2009, but the Hawkeyes blocked two field goals in the final seconds that day to preserve a precarious 17-16 victory.

There was no such luck this time.

Several of Iowa's defenders acknowledged they got tired in the fourth quarter when they spent most of the final stanza on the field, but the North Dakota State offense spent just as much time on the field in the fourth period and appeared fresh as a daisy.

North Dakota State has a very good defense, but it's hard to understand how the Hawkeyes finished with only 34 yards on the ground on their home turf. Daniels netted just 29 yards on 14 carries. Akrum Wadley, perhaps slowed by a sore knee, finished with 20 yards on four tries.

The first play of the second half certainly hurt Iowa's rushing stats and set a bad tone for the rest of the game. Daniels broke loose for a 62-yard run to the North Dakota State 3-yard line, but Kittle was called for holding and the play was wiped off the books.

Even so, that was only one play in a 60-minute game.

Here are the final stats that tell the story:

## **Bison shoved weary Hawkeyes out of the way**

Written by Jim Ecker

Sunday, 18 September 2016 06:01 -

---

- + North Dakota State finished with more first downs, 21-12.
  
- + North Dakota State dominated the run game, 239-34.
  
- + North Dakota State dominated total offense, 363-231.
  
- + The Bison had 68 plays from scrimmage, compared to 49 for Iowa.
  
- + The Bison controlled the clock for 36 minutes, 40 seconds, compared to 23:20 for Iowa.

Iowa Coach Kirk Ferentz praised North Dakota State to the hilt after the game and talked about the little things that went wrong for the Hawkeyes, such as a few dropped passes and missed assignments, but the Bison managed to overcome similar problems and snare the precious victory.

The Hawkeyes appeared to be in good shape after starting the season with a 2-0 record, but now there are many questions that need to be answered before they open the Big Ten season at Rutgers next Saturday.

Suddenly, the Big Ten West Division appears a lot different than it did at the start of the season. Wisconsin knocked off then-No.5 LSU earlier this month and Nebraska beat No. 22 Oregon on Saturday, so Iowa could be facing some major hurdles as it tries to defend its division crown.