

## Akers helps No.1 Warriors top Prairie

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 10 October 2014 23:42 - Last Updated Friday, 10 October 2014 23:50

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Landen Akers had a few problems hanging onto punts Friday night, but he made amends with a huge play on defense.

Akers intercepted a pass near the goal line and raced 99 yards for a touchdown to help No. 1 Washington knock off Prairie, 28-6, at John Wall Field.

Washington led 21-6 with four minutes left in the game, but the Hawks marched to the 5-yard line and could have made it a tight game with a touchdown.

Akers had other ideas.

Prairie quarterback Dakota Simonsen lofted a fourth-down pass toward the end zone, but Akers saw it coming and made a clean interception. Akers is one of the top quarter-milers in the state and nobody was going to catch him once he got going.

"I saw he was throwing a fade route to the corner, so I just waited back and waited for the ball and went up and got it," he said. "It's pretty fun, because I made a few mistakes in the game earlier. I tried to make up for it."

Akers is normally a sure-handed guy, but he bobbled a few punts and lost one of them with a fumble. He kept his head in the game and made a big play when it counted, however.

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Washington's defense held the injury-plagued Hawks to just 90 yards of total offense.

"Our thought our defense played exceptionally well again," said Washington Coach Paul James. "It's good that this team has a lot of different ways that they can get it done.

"It's especially nice to have a solid defense. They've been playing exceptional all year. Tonight was no different."

Prairie quarterback Trey Beckman missed his second straight game while trying to recover from the second concussion of his high school football career. Jalen Rima, Prairie's top receiver and a dangerous man on kick returns, left the game in the first quarter with a bad ankle after breaking loose for a 40-yard kickoff return.

The Hawks had trouble moving the ball without them against one of the top defenses in the state.

"That definitely didn't help, but no excuses," said Prairie Coach Mike Morrissey. "We had opportunities to make big plays. And really they (the Warriors) controlled the game up front. That's where it's won and lost."



Prairie pulled within 14-6 in the third quarter on a pair of field goals by Sam Drysdale, but Washington responded with a pair of touchdowns in the fourth period.

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Quarterback Reid Snitker made it 20-6 with a 7-yard run with 8:01 left in the game and Akers sealed the victory with his interception return with 3:51 remaining.

Snitker enjoyed his best passing game of the season. He hit 8 of 12 passes for 103 yards in the first half as the Warriors built a 14-0 lead and he finished 10 of 16 for 129 yards, including a 6-yard TD pass to Connor Vincent.

"This week we were really working on passing," said Snitker. "We were going over reads and setting up plays.

"With the run game being so good this year, I think we just kind of laid back on the passing a little bit, but tonight we needed it and we came through."

Washington (7-0, 3-0) ran for 169 yards on 41 carries against Prairie, but never got thoroughly untracked on the ground. The Warriors finished with 298 yards of total offense.

"I thought our defense played pretty well, to be honest with you," said Morrissey.

James was glad to see the improvement in Washington's passing game.

"We've been working on it," he said. "It's just a matter of confidence. There were a lot of good things that we can take from this.

"I think we're coming along," said James. "We're not getting too worried about things." Washington's biggest problem Friday was holding onto the ball. The Warriors lost four fumbles, but the Hawks were not able to take full advantage.

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Washington hosts Iowa City High Thursday at Kingston Stadium. Prairie (3-4, 1-2) visits Muscatine next Friday.

Morrissey thinks Beckman might be able to play next week.

"He wanted to play tonight," said Morrissey. "We think he'll be back and ready to go in practice on Monday."

Simonsen, a sophomore, completed 6 of 20 passes for 28 yards.

WASHINGTON 28, PRAIRIE 6

CRW      CRP

First downs 16 6

Rushes-yards 41-169      31-62

Passing yards      129      28

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Comp-Att-Int 10-17-0 6-21-1

Fumbles-lost 5-4 1-0

Punts-avg. 1-42.0 8-33.4

Penalties-yards 6-49 9-43

Washington 7 7 0 14 - 28

Prairie 0 0 6 0 - 6

### Scoring plays

W - Johnny Dobbs 2 run (Gunner Lenzen kick)

W - Connor Vincent 6 pass from Reid Snitker (Lenzen kick)

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P - Sam Drysdale 31 FG

P - Drysdale 44 FG

W - Snitker 7 run (Lenzen kick)

W - Landen Akers 98 interception return (

### Individual Statistics

#### Rushing

Washington - Patrick 16-73, Dobbs 9-36, Vincent 4-20, Nimmers 2-7, Smothers 2-7, Snitker 6-30, Akers 1-8, Team 1-minus 12.

Prairie - Pinter 16-72, Simonsen 11-minus 4, Jojuan Simpson 1-minus 4, Browning 1-minus 2, JoJo Simpson 2-0.

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### Passing

Washington - Snitker 10-16-0, 129; Nimmers 0-1-0, 0.

Prairie - Simonsen 6-20-1, 28; Pinter 0-1-0, 0.

### Receiving

Washington - Akers 3-29, Nimmers 1-26, Smothers 1-13, Hobbs 1-19, Vincent 3-32, Rambo 1-10.

Prairie - Jojuan Simpson 2-17, Nunemaker 2-1, Pinter 2-10.