



While getting tackled by members of the Mid-Missouri Outlaws, Iowa Blackhawks running back Mell Holliday goes into the end zone for the team's second touchdown of the night.

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## Blackhawks lose heartbreaker

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Although it seemed unlikely at the outset, the battle of the unbeatens lived up to its pregame billing Saturday at the Mid-America Center.

The Iowa Blackhawks, leaders of the American Professional Football League, scored on their first five possessions and led 35-0 yet fell to Central Plains Football League champion Mid-Missouri 54-49 when the Outlaws stopped 235-pound running back Mell Holliday on first-and-goal at the 1 as time expired.

Iowa (5-1) jumped on top Saturday when Marque McCray hauled in a 28-yard touchdown reception from Chuck Wright on the third play from scrimmage. Holliday added a pair of first-half rushing TDs as the Blackhawks built a 35-0 lead less than 20 minutes into the game.

At that point, Mid-Missouri had one turnover and had managed only a single yard of total offense. However, the Outlaws found their offensive groove midway through the second and outscored Iowa 54-14 over the final 2 1/2 quarters to improve to 11-0.

"We've been down like this before," Mid-Missouri quarterback Kyle Middleton said. "Granted this is a completely better league, but we've got some true champions on the team. They knew we could battle back. We knew our offense was going to put up points, and our defense was the best in our league. We knew they were going to make a stop there."

Middleton threw a pair of scoring passes and rushed for another to pull the Outlaws to within 35-22 at the half. A 10-yard interception return for a TD by Antoine Stewart with 7:58 left in the third cut the Iowa lead to 42-36, and Mid-Missouri was seemingly going to have a chance to tie or move in front when Stewart scooped up a Holliday fumble at the goal line and started racing the other way.

But the Outlaw defender lost the ball himself after crossing midfield.

The Blackhawks recovered and moved back in front by two scores when Holliday punched it in from one yard out five plays later.

Mid-Missouri answered with a 30-yard TD pass from Middleton to Eric Brown. Its defense held Iowa to a three-and-out, and Middleton connected with Marcus James for a 34-yard score to make it 49-48 with 4:29 to play.

Blackhawk kicker Jerry Lakin missed a 51-yard field goal attempt to the left late in the game, giving the Outlaws the ball at midfield. Five plays later, Middleton tossed his fifth scoring pass, an 18-yard fade to Brown for the game-winner, to put Mid-Missouri in front for the first time.

"In indoor football, points can be scored in droves," Iowa coach Mike Wolff said. "That's what happened to us. We got a little complacent. We thought we had the game won, and Mid-Missouri played like a champion."

Mid-Missouri (11-0) 0 22 14 18 - 54

Iowa (5-1) 21 14 7 7 - 49

I - Marque McCray 28 pass from Chuck Wright (Jerry Lakin kick)

I - Mell Holliday 5 run (Lakin kick)

I - Steve Rush 5 run (Lakin kick)

I - Holliday 1 run (Lakin kick)

I - Andrew Seymour 5 pass from Wright (Lakin kick)

MM - Eric Brown 15 pass from Kyle Middleton (kick blocked)

MM - Tenny Barber 6 pass from Middleton (Brown pass from Middleton)

MM - Middleton 1 run (Curtis Walk pass from Middleton)

I - Holliday 3 run (Lakin kick)

MM - Ben Lyles 15 pass from Middleton (Chad Jackson kick)

MM - Antoine Stewart 10 interception return (Jackson kick)

I - Holliday 1 run (Lakin kick)

MM - Brown 30 pass from Middleton (kick blocked)

MM - Brown 18 pass from Middleton (pass failed)