



SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

JACKRABBIT ATHLETICS NEWS RELEASE

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2020-21 FOOTBALL INFORMATION

Home slate opens with WIU

JACKRABBIT GAME NOTES — MARCH 6

WESTERN ILLINOIS (0-1, 0-1 MVFC)
at #8 SOUTH DAKOTA STATE (1-1, 1-1 MVFC)
2 p.m. Saturday

Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium; Brookings, S.D.



SERIES NOTES

- 16th Meeting (South Dakota State leads series 10-5)
- SDSU won the last meeting, 52-24, on Oct. 28, 2017, at Macomb, Illinois

MEDIA INFORMATION

- Game will be televised on MidcoSN2 and ESPN+, as well as the Jackrabbits All-Access media portal (subscription) at GoJacks.com
- Pre-game radio show begins at 1 p.m. Central Time on the Jackrabbit Sports Network, which includes originating station 104.1 FM-Yankton (joined in progress on WNAX 570 AM) and the following affiliates:
 - KJJQ 910 AM-Brookings • KBFS 1450 AM-Belle Fourche • KDSJ 980 AM-Deadwood
 - KORN 1490 AM-Mitchell • KELO 1320 AM/KELQ 107.9 FM-Sioux Falls
 - KCCR 1240 AM-Pierre • KLOH 1050 AM/94.1 FM-Pipestone, Minn.
 - KWYR 93.7 FM-Winner • KXLG 99.1 FM/100.1 FM-Watertown

Note: Some affiliates may opt to carry SDSU basketball games at Summit League Championship instead.

- Free audio streaming available through Jackrabbits All-Access
- Radio team of Scotty Kwas (play-by-play), Alex Parker(color) and Al Bahe (sidelines) will call the action



HEAD COACH: Jared Elliott (Miami (Ohio), 2007)

• 6-18 record in three seasons as a collegiate head coach

STARTERS RETURNING: 8 (4 Off., 3 Def., 1 ST)

HEAD COACH: John Stiegelmeier (SDSU, 1979)

• 167-106 record in 24 seasons — all at South Dakota State

STARTERS RETURNING: 15 (4 Off., 8 Def., 1 ST)

2020-21 SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY

19 *at Northern Iowa W, 24-20
 27 *at North Dakota L, 17-28

MARCH

6 *WESTERN ILLINOIS 2 p.m.
 13 *YOUNGSTOWN STATE 2 p.m.
 20 *at Southern Illinois noon
 27 *ILLINOIS STATE 2 p.m.

APRIL

3 *at North Dakota State 2:30 p.m.
 10 *SOUTH DAKOTA 2 p.m.
 24 FCS Playoffs Begin [if qualified] TBA

* Missouri Valley Football Conference game
 All times Central

TALE OF THE TAPE — SEASON STATISTICS

WESTERN ILLINOIS	CATEGORY	SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
24.0	Points Per Game	20.5
30.0	Points Allowed Per Game	24.0
48.0	Rushing Yardage Per Game	106.0
155.0	Rush Yardage Allowed/Game	102.5
281.0	Passing Yardage Per Game	251.5
8.3	Average Per Catch	14.4
278.0	Pass Yardage Allowed/Game	186.0
329.0	Total Offense Per Game	357.5
433.0	Total Offense Allowed/Game	288.5
21.8	Kick Return Average	24.5
1.0	Punt Return Average	16.5
2-13	Interception Returns	1-0
2-2	Fumbles-Lost	3-3
8-75	Penalties-Yards	15-130
25:39	Time of Possession/Game	28:43
6-16 (38%)	Third-Down Conversions	11/26 (42%)

GAME NOTES — WESTERN ILLINOIS AT SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

DAIRY DRIVE GAMES

2014: SDSU 44, Cal Poly 18 (12,219 att.)
 2015: SDSU 55, Southern Utah 10 (13,423 att.)
 2016: SDSU 49, Missouri State 24 (10,826 att.)
 2017: SDSU 51, Duquesne 13 (12,218 att.)
 2018: SDSU 45, Montana State 14 (14,614 att.)
 2019: SDSU 38, Long Island 3 (10,153 att.)

HOME OPENERS DURING THE JOHN STIEGELMEIER ERA

1997: Minnesota State, Mankato 21, SDSU 7
 1998: *SDSU 56, Wisconsin-Stout 13
 1999: SDSU 38, Augustana 31
 2000: *SDSU 36, Grand Valley State (Mich.) 27
 2001: *SDSU 34, Ferris State (Mich.) 24
 2002: *SDSU 28, Chadron State (Neb.) 15
 2003: *SDSU 20, Northwest Missouri State 0
 2004: SDSU 45, Winona State 20
 2005: *SDSU 42, Wisconsin-La Crosse 13
 2006: *Wisconsin-La Crosse 17, SDSU 3
 2007: Northern Iowa 31, SDSU 17
 2008: SDSU 40, Youngstown State 7
 2009: *SDSU 44, Georgia Southern 6
 2010: Illinois State 24, SDSU 14
 2011: *SDSU 29, Southern Utah 28
 2012: SDSU 12, UC Davis 8
 2013: *SDSU 55, Butler (Ind.) 14
 2014: SDSU 44, Cal Poly 18
 2015: SDSU 55, Southern Utah 10
 2016: SDSU 56, Drake 28
 2017: *SDSU 51, Duquesne 13
 2018: *SDSU 45, Montana State 14
 2019: SDSU 38, Long Island 3

* Also overall season opener
 SDSU is 19-4 in home openers under Coach Stiegelmeier

Sports Information Contact: Jason Hove

March 2, 2021

BROOKINGS, S.D. — After facing two ranked, dome-dwelling opponents in the first two weeks of the season, the South Dakota State University football team will make its home debut of the 2020-21 spring season and a return to the great outdoors Saturday, hosting Western Illinois in Missouri Valley Football Conference action.

Kickoff for the Dairy Drive game is slated for 2 p.m. at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium. The game will be televised on MidcoSN2 and ESPN+, with additional coverage through the Jackrabbits All-Access media portal (subscription) at GoJacks.com.

Although SDSU has implemented attendance restrictions for the spring season, a limited number of tickets remain available for purchase at JackrabbitTickets.com.

SDSU, ranked eighth in this week's Stats Perform FCS Top 25, split its first two games, winning 21-17 at No. 3 Northern Iowa on Feb. 19 before falling 28-17 Feb. 27 at 14th-ranked North Dakota. The Jackrabbits dropped five spots in this week's poll.

Western Illinois, 0-1 overall and in the MVFC, had its scheduled opener at South Dakota postponed due to COVID concerns, then dropped a 30-24 home decision to Missouri State on Feb. 27.

THE SERIES: Saturday's game will mark the 16th meeting on the gridiron between the Jackrabbits and Western Illinois, but the first matchup between the two programs since 2017. The series dates back to a 28-21 Fighting Leatherneck victory at SDSU's Coughlin-Alumni Stadium in 1976.

Overall, SDSU leads the all-time series by a 10-5 count on the strength of winning nine of the last 10 matchups, including a seven-game winning streak from 2008-14.

Since moving to the Football Championship Subdivision, SDSU holds a 9-2 series advantage. Both of Western Illinois' victories since 2007 have been in overtime games on its home field. The Leathernecks claimed a 29-26, four-overtime victory in the 2007 season opener, adding a 30-24 double-overtime win in the 2015 regular season finale.

In the last meeting, Oct. 28, 2017, at Hanson Field in Macomb, Illinois, Jackrabbit quarterback Taryn Christion accounted for six touchdowns, including three scoring strikes to Jake Wieneke, as eighth-ranked SDSU pulled away in the second half for a 52-24 victory over the 12th-ranked Fighting Leathernecks.

HOME OPENERS: South Dakota State has fared well in home openers under head coach John Stiegelmeier, who is in his 24th season at the helm of the Jackrabbit football program. In 23 previous home openers, SDSU has compiled a 19-4 record and has won nine in a row.

DAIRY DRIVE: Now in its seventh year, the Dairy Drive recognizes the importance of the dairy industry to the South Dakota economy and promotes the ties to SDSU as the state's Land-Grant institution.

The Jackrabbits have come out victorious in all six previous Dairy Drive games, with five of those contests also serving as the home opener.

ELITE COMPANY: South Dakota State is one of only two Football Championship Subdivision programs to reach the playoffs each of the last eight seasons, including making consecutive national semifinal appearances in 2017 and 2018.

North Dakota State holds the longest active streak with 10 consecutive trips to the playoffs.

RANKINGS STREAK: With its appearance in this week's STATS Perform FCS Poll, SDSU has now appeared in the top 25 of 108 consecutive media polls dating back to October 2012.

Following is a week-by-week look at the Jackrabbits' rankings this season:

Date	STATS	AFCA Coaches
Preseason	5th	—
Feb. 22	3rd	—
March 1	8th	—

GAME NOTES — WESTERN ILLINOIS AT SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

2020-21 GAME HIGHS

TEAM GAME HIGHS

RUSHING ATTEMPTS: 34, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
RUSHING YARDS: 116, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
YARDS PER RUSH: 3.7, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
RUSHING TOUCHDOWNS: 1, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
PASS ATTEMPTS: 32, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
PASS COMPLETIONS: 19, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
YARDS PASSING: 309, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
YARDS PER PASS: 9.7, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
PASSING TOUCHDOWNS: 2, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021, and at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
TOTAL PLAYS: 63, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
TOTAL OFFENSE: 405, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
YARDS PER PLAY: 7.0, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
POINTS: 24, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
FIRST DOWNS: 16, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
SACKS BY: 2, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
PENALTIES: 9, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
PENALTY YARDS: 80, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
TURNOVERS BY: 3, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
TURNOVERS FORCED: 1, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
INTERCEPTIONS: 1, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
FUMBLES RECOVERED: N/A

SDSU'S 2020-21 RECORD WHEN...

Jackrabbits score first	1-1
Opponent scores first	0-0
Jackrabbits lead after one quarter.....	0-1
Opponent leads after one quarter	1-0
Game is tied after one quarter	0-0
Jackrabbits lead at halftime	1-1
Opponent leads at halftime	0-0
Game is tied at halftime.....	0-0
Jackrabbits lead after three quarters.....	1-0
Opponent leads after three quarters	0-1
Game is tied after three quarters	0-0
Game is decided in overtime.....	0-0
Jackrabbits play at home.....	0-0
SDSU plays on the the road	1-1
Jackrabbits commit fewer turnovers than opponent ..	0-0
Opponent commits fewer turnovers than SDSU.....	1-1
Turnover margin is equal.....	0-0
Jackrabbits commit fewer penalties than opponent ..	0-0
Opponent commits fewer penalties than SDSU	1-1
Teams commit same number of penalties	0-0
Jackrabbits have time of possession advantage	1-0
Opponent has time of possession advantage	0-1
Game is played on artificial surface	1-1
Game is played on natural grass/hybrid surface	0-0
Game is played during the day	0-1
Game is played at night (6 p.m. or later kickoff)	1-0

CAPTAINS: Leading the Jackrabbit football team on the field and in the locker room are five captains:

- Logan Backhaus, Sr., linebacker, Spirit Lake, Iowa;
- Wes Genant, Sr., offensive lineman, Parkston, South Dakota.;
- Michael Griffin II, Sr., safety, Cottage Grove, Minnesota;
- Pierre Strong, Jr.; Jr., running back, Little Rock, Arkansas, and
- Preston Tetzlaff, Sr., linebacker, Brookings, South Dakota.

Backhaus is in his second season as a team captain. All four other captains are in their first seasons in the role.

SEEKING ANOTHER MILESTONE WIN: South Dakota State's season-opening win at Northern Iowa marked the program's 99th victory since joining the Missouri Valley Football Conference at the start of the 2008 season. Overall, the Jackrabbits have posted a 99-55 record (.643 winning record) in that span, including a 67-31 mark in league games.

SDSU has not finished below .500 in league play in any of its 12 full seasons as an MVFC member, making it the only current member (outside of newcomer North Dakota) since 2008 to be able to make that claim.

Since moving to the FCS ranks at the start of the 2004 season, the Jackrabbits have posted a 125-73 overall record (.631 winning percentage). SDSU spent its first four years at the FCS level as a member of the Great West Football Conference.

SDSU has turned in a winning record in 14 of 16 full seasons as an FCS member.

VALLEY PREVIEW: South Dakota State was picked to finish third in the Missouri Valley Football Conference preseason poll, which was announced earlier this month.

The Jackrabbits, who finished the 2019 season with an 8-5 overall record and 5-3 mark in the MVFC, tallied 91 points in the balloting among league coaches, sports information directors and a media panel. The Jackrabbits extended their streak of Football Championship Subdivision playoff appearances to eight seasons in 2019.

Defending conference and FCS national champion North Dakota State again led the preseason poll with 101 points, followed by Northern Iowa with 92 points. Rounding out the top five were Illinois State (80) and Southern Illinois (68).

In the bottom half of the poll, South Dakota was sixth with 52 points, followed by league newcomer North Dakota with 39 points. Youngstown State held the eighth spot with 36 points, with Missouri State and Western Illinois tying for ninth with 23 points. Indiana State has opted out of the spring season.

MVFC squads are playing an eight-game league schedule, with games beginning the weekend of Feb. 19-21. Ten of the league's 11 teams will play a spring season after Indiana State opted out in January.

In addition, nine Jackrabbits were honored on the MVFC Preseason Team revealed Wednesday. Three of SDSU's four first-team selections came on the defensive side of the ball, with defensive end Reece Winkelman, linebacker Logan Backhaus and cornerback Don Gardner honored.

Winkelman, a junior from Marshall, Minnesota, tied for the team lead with 6.5 sacks in 2019. He totaled 36 tackles, including nine tackles for loss, and forced a fumble in his first season as a starter.

A senior from Spirit Lake, Iowa, Backhaus is the team's top returning tackler after registering 79 tackles in 2019 to rank third on the squad. An honorable mention all-MVFC selection in 2019, he shared the team lead with four interceptions and three forced fumbles.

Gardner put together an all-conference season in 2019, earning second-team honors after registering 45 tackles, six tackles for loss and a team-high six pass breakups. The senior from Chicago also scored two defensive touchdowns — one on his lone interception of the 2019 season and the other on a fumble recovery.

GAME NOTES — WESTERN ILLINOIS AT SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

2020 GAME HIGHS

INDIVIDUAL GAME HIGHS

RUSHING ATTEMPTS: 22, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
RUSHING YARDS: 95, by Pierre Strong, Jr., at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
RUSHING TOUCHDOWNS: 1, by Mark Gronowski, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
LONG RUSH: 32 yards, by Pierre Strong, Jr., at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
PASS ATTEMPTS: 32, by Mark Gronowski, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
PASS COMPLETIONS: 19, by Mark Gronowski, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
YARDS PASSING: 309, by Mark Gronowski, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
TOUCHDOWN PASSES: 2, by Mark Gronowski, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021, and at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
RECEPTIONS: 7, by Jaxon Janke, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
YARDS RECEIVING: 161, by Jaxon Janke, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
RECEIVING TOUCHDOWNS: 2, by Jaxon Janke, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
LONG RECEPTION: 76 yards (for TD), by Jaxon Janke (from Mark Gronowski), at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
FIELD GOALS: 1, by Cole Frahm, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021, and at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
LONG FIELD GOAL: 39 yards, by Cole Frahm, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
PUNTS: 4, by Ben Dinkel, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
PUNTING AVERAGE: 42.2 yards (4 punts), by Ben Dinkel, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
LONG PUNT: 61 yards, by Ben Dinkel, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
LONG PUNT RETURN: 14 yards, by Jaxon Janke, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
LONG KICKOFF RETURN: 32 yards, by Jordan Meachum, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
TACKLES: 11, by Logan Backhaus, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
TACKLES FOR LOSS: 2.0, by three players (last: by Don Gardner, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021)
SACKS: 1.0, by Adam Bock and Tolu Ogunrinde, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021
INTERCEPTIONS: 1, by Preston Tetzlaff, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
PASS BREAKUPS: 2, by Don Gardner and Isaiah Stalbird, at North Dakota, 2-27-2021
FUMBLES FORCED: N/A
BLOCKED KICKS: 1, by Isaiah Stalbird, at Northern Iowa, 2-19-2021

The lone first-team offensive selection for the Jackrabbits was running back Pierre Strong, Jr. A junior from Little Rock, Arkansas, Strong has posted consecutive 1,000-yard seasons, rushing for 1,116 yards as a freshman in 2018 and 1,018 yards in 11 games as a sophomore. He also rushed for eight touchdowns in 2019 en route to All-America recognition from the Associated Press and HERO Sports.

Receiving honorable mention recognition on offense were sophomore quarterback J'Bore Gibbs and senior offensive lineman Wes Genant. Gibbs started the first six games in 2019 before suffering a season-ending injury. He completed 59 percent of his passes (73-of-124) for 1,058 yards and 10 touchdowns, while adding four scores on the ground.

Genant, a Parkston native, has played all along the offensive line during his Jackrabbit career. He returns to a starting role at center during the 2020-21 season after redshirting in 2019.

Honorable mention selections on defense for the Jackrabbits included seniors Xavier Ward and Michael Griffin II.

A defensive tackle from Freeman, Ward saw his streak of starting 26 games in a row for the Jackrabbits come to an end as he missed the Feb. 19 season opener due to injury. He contributed 21 total tackles in 2019, including seven tackles for loss with four sacks.

Griffin earned a spot on the MVFC All-Newcomer Team in 2019. A safety from Cottage Grove, Minnesota, he shared the team lead with four interceptions, while also tallying 40 tackles and a pair of fumble recoveries.

Also earning preseason recognition was sophomore Jaxon Janke as a return specialist. The Madison native averaged 10.7 yards per punt return — with one touchdown — in 2019 and added 29 receptions for 353 yards and four touchdowns as a wide receiver in being named to the MVFC All-Newcomer Team.

STRONG EARNS PRESEASON PRAISE: Jackrabbit running back Pierre Strong, Jr., was named last month to the preseason All-America team selected by HERO Sports.

A junior from Little Rock, Arkansas, Strong received first-team accolades after topping the 1,000-yard mark in each of his first two seasons. He rushed for 1,116 yards as a freshman in 2018 and gained 1,018 yards with eight touchdowns in 11 games as a sophomore. Over two seasons, Strong averaged 8.2 yards per carry, and needed only 100 carries to reach the 1,000-yard mark during the 2018 season.

Strong moved into the SDSU career top 10 for rushing in last week's game at North Dakota and enters Saturday's game with 2,320 career yards.

He was selected as the Missouri Valley Football Conference Offensive Player of the Week after tallying 142 all-purpose yards, including 91 rushing yards, and scoring the game-winning touchdown on a 1-yard pass play with 19 seconds remaining in South Dakota State's 24-20 victory at Northern Iowa on Feb. 19.

In 2019, Strong became only the seventh player in SDSU history to top the 1,000-yard mark in consecutive seasons. He will attempt to become the third to post three straight 1,000-yard campaigns.

Following is the complete list of Jackrabbits with consecutive 1,000-yard seasons:

- Pete Retzlaff, 1951 (1,016 yards) and 1952 (1,008)
- Darwin Gonnerman, 1967 (1,023) and 1968 (1,023)
- Les Tuma, 1972 (1,061) and 1973 (1,052)
- Josh Ranek, 1998 (1,881) and 1999 (2,055)
- Kyle Minett, 2008 (1,289), 2009 (1,304) and 2010 (1,208)
- Zach Zenner, 2012 (2,044), 2013 (2,015) and 2014 (2,019)
- Pierre Strong, Jr., 2018 (1,116), 2019 (1,018)

FAST STARTS: SDSU has scored on its opening drive in each of its games this year. Cole Frahm kicked a field goal to open the scoring Feb. 19 at Northern Iowa, while Jaxon Janke caught an 18-yard touchdown on the first drive last week at North Dakota.

GAME NOTES — WESTERN ILLINOIS AT SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

SERIES SCORES

1976:	Western Illinois 28, South Dakota State 21 (Sept. 11, 1976, at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium)
1977:	South Dakota State 23, Western Illinois 6 (Sept. 10, 1977, at Macomb, Ill.)
1980:	Western Illinois 33, South Dakota State 27 (Sept. 13, 1980, at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium)
1981:	Western Illinois 17, South Dakota State 13 (Sept. 12, 1981, at Macomb, Ill.)
2007:	Western Illinois 29, South Dakota St. 26 [4 OT] (Aug. 30, 2007, at Macomb, Ill.)
2008:	South Dakota State 24, Western Illinois 22 (Sept. 13, 2008, at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium)
2009:	South Dakota State 27, Western Illinois 7 (Nov. 21, 2009, at Macomb, Ill.)
2010:	South Dakota State 33, Western Illinois 29 (Oct. 9, 2010, at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium)
2011:	South Dakota State 27, Western Illinois 7 (Nov. 12, 2011, at Macomb, Ill.)
2012:	South Dakota State 31, Western Illinois 10 (Oct. 13, 2012, at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium)
2013:	South Dakota State 38, Western Illinois 14 (Oct. 12, 2013, at Macomb, Ill.)
2014:	South Dakota State 59, Western Illinois 24 (Nov. 15, 2014, at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium)
2015:	Western Illinois 30, South Dakota St. 24 [2 OT] (Nov. 21, 2015, at Macomb, Ill.)
2016:	South Dakota State 52, Western Illinois 14 (Oct. 1, 2016, at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium)
2017:	South Dakota State 52, Western Illinois 24 (Oct. 28, 2017, at Macomb, Ill.)
Overall, SDSU leads the series, 10-5	

GRONOWSKI UNDER CENTER: True freshman Mark Gronowski has taken the reins of the Jackrabbit offense after winning a three-way battle for the starting quarterback position in spring camp.

A native of Naperville, Illinois, Gronowski turned in an impressive collegiate debut by accounting for all three South Dakota State touchdowns as the Jackrabbits prevailed in a matchup between top-five teams in the Feb. 19 season opener at Northern Iowa. He completed 19-of-29 passes for 194 yards and touchdown passes of 6 yards to Jaxon Janke in the second quarter and a 1-yard game-winning toss with 19 seconds left to Pierre Strong, Jr. He also rushed for 24 yards on 10 carries, including a 5-yard touchdown late in the first half.

For his efforts, Gronowski was selected as both the Missouri Valley Football Conference Newcomer of the Week and the Stats Perform FCS National Freshman Player of the Week.

In his next start, Gronowski completed 16-of-32 passes for 309 yards and two first-quarter touchdowns Feb. 27 at North Dakota.

Gronowski is the fourth different quarterback to start a game for the Jackrabbits since the end of the 2018 season, when All-American Taryn Christion wrapped up his career with 41 consecutive starts. J'Bore Gibbs started six games as a redshirt freshman in 2019, including the season opener. Kanin Nelson started the second and third games of the season, while Keaton Heide started the final five games after Gibbs was lost for the season due to injury.

GETTING DEFENSIVE: South Dakota State held Northern Iowa to a meager 28 net yards rushing in the Feb. 19 season opener, a total that ranks as the third-lowest allowed by the Jackrabbits against a Missouri Valley Football Conference opponent since joining the league in 2008. The Panthers' 28 yards came on 25 attempts — an average of 1.1 yards per carry.

The fewest rushing yards allowed by a Jackrabbit team in an MVFC game is 22 yards (on 22 carries) by South Dakota on Nov. 17, 2012. SDSU surrendered only 25 yards (on 24 attempts) versus Indiana State on Sept. 19, 2009.

INTERCEPTION STREAK ENDS: South Dakota State's defensive streak of consecutive games with an interception came to an end at 13 games in the 2020-21 season opener at Northern Iowa.

SDSU recorded at least one interception in all 13 games during the 2019 season, highlighted by a three-pick performance in the regular season matchup against UNI.

As a team, the Jackrabbits tallied 18 interceptions to rank sixth among Football Championship Subdivision programs. Linebacker Logan Backhaus and safety Michael Griffin II shared the team lead with four interceptions. In all, 10 different Jackrabbit players recorded at least one interception in 2019.

Dating back to the 2018 season, SDSU has intercepted a pass in 20 of its last 22 games as linebacker Preston Tetzlaff started a new streak at North Dakota with a fourth-quarter pickoff.

SACK ATTACK: The South Dakota State defense nearly doubled its sack total from the previous year in 2019, tallying 37 sacks to rank 16th among FCS programs with an average of 2.85 per game. That compared to 20 sacks in 2018.

Despite the loss of team co-leader Ryan Earith, the Jackrabbits do return four of their top five sack artists from the 2019 squad. Junior defensive end Reece Winkelman shared the team lead with Earith with 6.5 sacks, while pass rush specialist Quinton Hicks tallied five sacks during an impressive freshman campaign in 2019. Also returning are defensive tackle Xavier Ward (four sacks) and defensive end Tolu Ogunrinde (2.5).

SDSU notched two sacks in the Feb. 19 season opener at Northern Iowa, with Adam Bock and Tolu Ogunrinde credited with solo sacks. The Jacks did not register a sack Feb. 27 at North Dakota.

QUICK FACTS

SDSU INFORMATION

LOCATION: Brookings, S.D.
ENROLLMENT: 11,405 (fall 2020)
COLORS: Yellow and Blue
NICKNAME: Jackrabbits
AFFILIATION: NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision
CONFERENCE: Missouri Valley Football Conference
STADIUM: Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium (19,340 capacity - AstroTurf surface)

2019 RECAP

OVERALL RECORD: 8-5
CONFERENCE RECORD: 5-3 (tied for third place in Missouri Valley Football Conference)
POSTSEASON: Football Championship Subdivision Second Round (seeded seventh)
HOME RECORD: 5-3
AWAY RECORD: 3-2
FINAL RANKINGS: 10th (Stats Perform media)/12th (FCS Coaches)

TEAM INFORMATION

LETTERMEN RETURNING: 37 **LETTERMEN LOST:** 24
 • Offense: 18 • Offense: 10
 • Defense: 17 • Defense: 12
 • Special Teams: 2 • Special Teams: 2

STARTERS RETURNING: 14
 • Offense: 5 • Defense: 8 • Special Teams: 1

OFFENSIVE STARTERS RETURNING (5): Aron Johnson, OT; J'Bore Gibbs, QB; Eagan Lickiss, OG; Eddie Miller, OG; Pierre Strong, Jr., RB.

DEFENSIVE STARTERS RETURNING (8): Logan Backhaus, LB; DyShawn Gales, CB; Don Gardner, CB; Michael Griffin II, S; Joshua Manchigiah, S; Caleb Sanders, DL; Xavier Ward, DT; Reece Winkelman, DE.

SPECIAL TEAMS STARTERS RETURNING (1): Ben Dinkel, P.

OTHER RETURNING LETTERMEN (23): Deyon Campbell, WR; Skyler Cavanaugh, TE; Cole Frahm, K; Wes Genant, OL; Garret Greenfield, OL; Jon Gruetzmacher, OL; Keaton Heide, QB; Quinton Hicks, DE; Jadon Janke, WR; Jaxon Janke, WR; Krockett Krolikowski, DT; Blake Kunz, TE; Malik Lofton, CB; Kinser Madison, LB; Mason McCormick, OL; Mike Morgan, TE/FB; Chase Norblade, S; Tolu Ogunrinde, DE; Caleb Schauf, TE; Payton Shafer, LB; Thomas Stacker, DT; Preston Tetzlaff, LB; Jason Titus, OL.

LIMITED RETURNS: South Dakota State all but eliminated the punt return game during the 2019 season. Opponents netted a total of four yards on seven punt returns (in 48 punts) last season.

That allowed the Jackrabbits to lead all FCS programs for punt return defense with an average of .57 yards per return for the entire season. Thus far during the 2020-21 season, the Jackrabbits have allowed 18 yards on three punt returns.

The longest punt return allowed by SDSU in 2019 was eight yards in the Aug. 29 season opener at Minnesota. The Jackrabbits also ranked 11th among FCS teams in net punting at 39.5 yards per attempt, with punter Ben Dinkel ranking 31st individually with an average of 41.6 yards per attempt.

SDSU also ranked eighth in kickoff return defense with an average of 13.5 yards allowed per attempt during the 2019 season.

BLOCK THAT KICK: South Dakota State continued to pick up where it left off with strong special teams play in the Feb. 19 season opener, including blocking a punt. Isaiah Stalbird's blocked punt late in the first half at Northern Iowa led to a touchdown that pushed the Jackrabbits' halftime lead to 17-7.

SDSU has consistently ranked among the FCS leaders for blocked kicks over the past few seasons. The Jackrabbits ranked ninth with five blocked kicks in 2019, after ranking third in 2018 with eight blocked kicks.

BALL SECURITY: One area the Jackrabbits will look to improve during the 2020-21 season is in the turnover margin department. Despite forcing 25 turnovers (18 interceptions, 7 fumbles), the Jackrabbits turned the ball over an uncharacteristic 24 times in 2019 to finish plus-1 in turnover margin.

Of the 24 turnovers, 17 were lost fumbles — the most by an SDSU squad in the Division I era (since 2004). By comparison, the Jackrabbits lost a total of 18 fumbles in the three previous seasons combined.

SDSU has lost three fumbles so far during the 2020-21 season and enters the week-end minus-4 in turnover margin.

TWIN CENTURY MARKS: South Dakota State's twin-brother receiving duo of Jaxon and Jadon Janke each topped the 100-yard mark for receiving Feb. 27 at North Dakota.

Jaxon Janke established new career highs of seven receptions for 161 yards, while tying a career best with two touchdowns (18, 76 yards). Jadon Janke added career highs of five catches and 109 receiving yards.

The Janke brothers became the first SDSU tandem with 100 receiving yards in a game since Cade Johnson (5-162) and Adam Anderson (4-128) against Arkansas-Pine Bluff on Sept. 15, 2018.

SEEING DOUBLE: The 2020-21 South Dakota State football team features two sets of twin brothers.

Returning for their sophomore seasons are wide receivers and Madison natives Jadon and Jaxon Janke. Jadon Janke has primarily contributed on special teams during his Jackrabbit career, while Jaxon Janke is the team's top returning receiver after catching 29 passes for 353 yards and four touchdowns in 2019. A member of the MVFC All-Newcomer Team that season, Jaxon Janke also handled the team's punt return duties, averaging 10.7 yards per attempt that included a 77-yard touchdown in the 2019 home opener against Long Island.

Joining the Jackrabbits this fall were twins Aaron and Adam Kusler. The Sioux Falls tandem, who excelled at Roosevelt High School, are both freshman linebackers on this year's squad.

SDSU has another set of brothers on the team in Brookings natives and offensive linemen Eddie and Gus Miller. Eddie is a senior on this year's team, while Gus is an incoming freshman.

GAME NOTES — WESTERN ILLINOIS AT SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

JACKRABBITS IN THE 2019 NCAA STATISTICS

TEAM (top 25)

- 1st in punt return defense, .57 yards/attempt
- 4th in fewest passing yards allowed, 165.8/game
- 5th in team passing efficiency defense, 110.17
- 6th in interceptions, 18
- 6th in scoring defense, 16.7 points/game
- 7th in total defense, 294.8 yards/game
- 8th in kickoff return defense, 15.70 yards/attempt
- 9th in blocked kicks, 5
- 11th in blocked punts, 2
- 11th in net punting, 39.48 yards/attempt
- 11th in defensive touchdowns, 3
- 12th in team passing efficiency, 154.42
- 13th in turnovers gained, 25
- 15th in red-zone defense, .722
- 16th in team sacks, 2.85/game
- 21st in third-down conversion pct.-defense, .337
- 22nd in fewest passes had intercepted, 7
- 22nd in completion percentage, .629
- 23rd in rushing offense, 198.2 yards/game
- 24th in rushing defense, 128.9 yards/game
- 25th in passing yards per completion, 13.75
- 25th in punt returns, 11.31 yards/attempt

INDIVIDUAL (top 40)

*BEN DINKEL

- 31st in punting, 41.6 yards/attempt

*MICHAEL GRIFFIN II

- 35th in interceptions/game, 0.3
- T-39th in fumbles recovered, 2

*JAXON JANKE

- T-2nd in punt return touchdowns, 1
- 14th in punt returns, 10.7 yards/attempt

CADE JOHNSON

- 7th in receiving yards, 1,222
- 17th in receiving yards per game, 94.0
- 29th in all-purpose yardage, 120.46 yards/game
- 35th in receptions per game, 5.5

CHRISTIAN ROZEBOOM

- T-39th in fumbles recovered, 2

*PIERRE STRONG, JR.

- 5th in rushing yards per carry, 7.12
- 22nd in rushing yards per game, 92.5
- 29th in rushing yards, 1,018

** Denotes returning player*

Rankings based on all games among 125 FCS teams

Must have played in half of team's games to qualify for rankings

JACKS IN THE PROS: At the conclusion of the 2020 football season, four former South Dakota State standouts were members of National Football League teams, continuing the Jackrabbits' long tradition of developing players into pro prospects.

Headlining the list is tight end Dallas Goedert of the Philadelphia Eagles. After being drafted in the second round of the 2018 NFL Draft, Goedert has gone on to record 137 receptions for 1,465 yards and 12 touchdowns in his first three seasons.

Veteran offensive lineman Bryan Witzmann returned to the Kansas City Chiefs in 2020, an organization for which he earned a starting role in 2017. He played in one game this past season, but was assigned to the team's practice squad for much of the year, including the postseason.

Witzmann has been with eight different teams since excelling for the Jackrabbits from 2010-13. He began the 2019 season with the Cleveland Browns and later played in two games for Carolina. He also has spent time with Houston, New Orleans, Dallas, Minnesota and Chicago.

Also on NFL rosters in 2020 as practice squad members were cornerback Jordan Brown (Washington) and linebacker Christian Rozeboom (Los Angeles Rams). Brown was a seventh-round choice of the Cincinnati Bengals in 2019 and also spent time on the practice squad for Jacksonville during his rookie campaign before entering 2020 training camp with the Las Vegas Raiders.

Rozeboom finished his Jackrabbit career as the program's all-time leading tackler and then signed as a free agent following the 2020 NFL Draft. Teammates Mikey Daniel (Atlanta Falcons) and Luke Sellers (Detroit Lions) also signed free agent agreements from the 2019 SDSU senior class.

In addition, wide receiver Jake Wieneke caught on with the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League in 2019 and finished the year with 41 catches for 569 yards with eight touchdowns. The CFL did not compete in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DANA J. DYKHOUSE STADIUM: Jackrabbit football moved into a new home in September of 2016 with the completion of Dana J. Dykhous Stadium.

The stadium, which was constructed in phases on the site of SDSU's previous home field, Coughlin-Alumni Stadium, seats 19,340 spectators and cost \$65 million to build. The stadium is being funded through private gifts and long-term revenue streams, including concessions and suite, loge box and ticket sales. Bonds are financing nearly two-thirds of the project's construction, with the remaining dollars coming from private support. Lead gifts totaling \$12.5 million from Sioux Falls banker Dana Dykhous and philanthropist T. Denny Sanford were announced in October 2013.

The stadium officially opened Sept. 8, 2016, featuring a concert by country music superstars Luke Bryan, Little Big Town and Lee Brice as part of the Jacks Bash opening weekend. The first football game was two days later, on Sept. 10, when the Jackrabbits defeated Drake, 56-28.

SDSU has gone on to post a 25-5 record at Dana J. Dykhous Stadium during its first four seasons of operation, including a 4-1 mark in Football Championship Subdivision playoff games. The Jackrabbits went undefeated at home in 2018 with a 7-0 mark.

Dana J. Dykhous Stadium was designed by Kansas City-based Crawford Architects, with the construction firm JE Dunn serving as the project manager at risk and Henry Carlson Company of Sioux Falls serving as general contractor. The stadium won the 2017 Alliant Build America Award from the Associated General Contractors of America South Dakota Building Chapter.

Year-By-Year Records at Dana J. Dykhous Stadium

2016: 6-1	2019: 5-3
2017: 7-1	Totals: 25-5
2018: 7-0	

GAME NOTES — WESTERN ILLINOIS AT SOUTH DAKOTA STATE

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AT NORTHERN IOWA

Offense: Mark Gronowski, Aron Johnson
 Defense: Caleb Sanders
 Special Teams: Isaiah Stalbird
 Scout Offense: A.J. Coons, Rudy Voss
 Scout Defense: Daeton Mcgaughy
 Scout Special Teams: Dalys Beanum
 Effort: Caleb Sanders

AT NORTH DAKOTA

Offense: Jaxon Janke, Mason McCormick
 Defense: Logan Backhaus
 Special Teams: none
 Scout Offense: Landon Wolf
 Scout Defense: Caleb Franci
 Scout Special Teams: Aaron Kusler
 Effort: N/A

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

COACHES

John Stiegelmeier	STIG-el-mey-er
Zach Lujan	LOO-honn
Luke Schleusner	SHLICE-ner

PLAYERS

Steven Arrell	ah-RELL
Logan Backhaus	BACK-huss
Max Baloun	bah-LOON
Matthew Borowicz	BORE-oh-wits
Mitch Eichacker	IKE-hack-er
Cole Frahm	fromm
Caleb Franci	FRANCE-ill
Wes Genant	juh-NANT
J'Bore Gibbs	juh-BORE-ay
Jon Gruetzmacher	GRITS-mock-er
Keaton Heide	HY-dee
Zach Heins	HINES
Jadon/Jaxon Janke	YON-key
Randy Keumogne	cuh-MOAN
Krockett Krolikowski	crow-lah-COW-ski
Blake Kunz	coons
Aaron/Adam Kusler	COOSE-ler
Mason Leighton	LAY-ton
Joshua Manchigiah	manch-ah-GUY-ah
Daeton Mcgaughy	mc-GOY
Tolu Ogunrinde	TOE-loo oh-GRIN-dee
Preston Tetzlaff	TETS-loff
Avian Thomas	AY-vee-on
Ryan Van Marel	van-MARR-ill
Trajan Walhof	TRAY-jun WALL-hoff
Xavier Ward	EX-zay-vee-ir

WORKING OVERTIME: South Dakota State has split its 10 overtime games since overtime rules were implemented in the mid-1990s. The Jackrabbits have won four of their five overtime contests in Missouri Valley Football Conference games, including a 37-34, double-overtime victory over Northern Iowa at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium on Oct. 26, 2013.

Following is a list of the Jackrabbits' overtime results

SDSU 30, Nebraska-Omaha 27 [2 OT] • Oct. 17, 1998 — at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium
 Augustana 39, SDSU 33 [3 OT] • Oct. 19, 2002 — at Sioux Falls
 Southern Utah 23, SDSU 17 [2 OT] • Nov. 13, 2004 — at Cedar City, Utah
 Western Illinois 29, SDSU 26 [4 OT] • Aug. 30, 2007 — at Macomb, Ill.
 McNeese State 46, SDSU 44 [3 OT] • Oct. 4, 2008 — at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium
 SDSU 43, Missouri State 36 [2 OT] • Oct. 29, 2011 — at Springfield, Mo.
 SDSU 37, Northern Iowa 34 [2 OT] • Oct. 26, 2013 — at Coughlin-Alumni Stadium
 Western Illinois 30, SDSU 24 [2 OT] • Nov. 21, 2015 — at Macomb, Ill.
 SDSU 27, Illinois State 24 [OT] • Nov. 11, 2017 — at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium
 SDSU 54, Indiana State 51 [OT] • Oct. 6, 2018 — at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium
 Overall, SDSU is 5-5 in overtime games

NEW COACHES: South Dakota State has some fresh faces on the sidelines and in the coaching booth this season.

Taking over the role of special teams coordinator and cornerbacks coach is Rob Erickson, who served as defensive coordinator and defensive backs coach for NCAA Division III powerhouse Wisconsin-Whitewater. During his tenure, UWW went a combined 56-9 en route to three national semifinal appearances, including a berth in the championship game in 2019.

Another new Jackrabbit coach with Wisconsin-Whitewater connections is tight ends coach Ryan Olson. An addition to the staff in January, Olson has coached at the collegiate level for nearly a decade, most recently serving as co-offensive coordinator and offensive line coach at Bemidji State from 2017-19.

As an offensive tackle as a player for Wisconsin-Whitewater, Olson was a member of national championship teams in 2009, 2010 and 2011 and played on squads that compiled a 58-2 record in his four seasons, including posting a 45-game winning streak.

To make room for Olson, passing game coordinator Luke Schleusner moves from coaching the tight ends to coaching the wide receivers.

Rejoining the SDSU coaching staff as running backs coach is John Johnson. He previously held the same position with the Jackrabbits from 2016-17.

STIG SHOW: The John Stiegelmeier Radio Show airs each Monday throughout the 2020-21 football season.

The show is scheduled to air at 6 p.m. on the Jackrabbit Sports Network, originating with flagship station WNAX 570 AM in Yankton. In addition, the weekly show, hosted by Tyler Merriam, also will be streamed online free of charge at GoJacks.com.

Please note there will not be a show March 8 due to expected coverage of the Summit League Basketball Championships.

A LOOK AHEAD: The Jackrabbits continue home action by hosting Youngstown State on March 13. Kickoff is slated for 2 p.m. at Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium.

DEPTH CHART vs. WESTERN ILLINOIS

OFFENSE

LT	71	ARON JOHNSON, 6-6, 295, Jr., Chisago City, Minn.
	68	Ian Bass, 6-4, 285, So., Rosemount, Minn.
LG	60	Mason McCormick, 6-4, 300, So., Sioux Falls, S.D.
	54	EDDIE MILLER, 6-5, 315, Sr., Brookings, S.D.
C	77	Wes Genant, 6-4, 295, Sr., Parkston, S.D.
	61	Evan Beemtsen, 6-4, 285, R-Fr., De Pere, Wis.
RG	56	EAGAN LICKISS, 6-4, 320, Sr., Indianola, Iowa
	76	Bo Donald, 6-6, 300, R-Fr., Kimball, S.D.
RT	74	Garret Greenfield, 6-6, 295, So., Rock Valley, Iowa
	75	Jon Gruetzmacher, 6-8, 310, Jr., Merrill, Wis.
TE	87	Zach Heins, 6-7, 260, So., Sioux Falls, S.D.
	34	Mike Morgan, 6-3, 235, So., New Lenox, Ill.
WR (Z-Back)	4	Canyon Bauer, 6-0, 195, R-Fr., Sioux Falls, S.D.
	19	Mason Leighton, 5-9, 175, Jr., Madison, S.D.
WR (X-Back)	9	Jadon Janke, 6-3, 210, So., Madison, S.D.
	4	Canyon Bauer, 6-0, 195, R-Fr., Sioux Falls, S.D.
WR (W-Back)	10	JAXON JANKE, 6-2, 210, So. Madison, S.D.
	7	Karst Hunter, 6-4, 205, R-Fr., Miller, S.D.
QB	11	Mark Gronowski, 6-3, 200, Fr., Naperville, Ill.
	2	JBORE GIBBS, 6-3, 230, So., Chicago, Ill.
or	13	Keaton Heide, 6-3, 195, So., Wayzata, Minn.
RB	20	PIERRE STRONG, JR., 5-11, 210, Jr., Little Rock, Ark.
	22	Isaiah Davis, 6-1, 220, Fr., Joplin, Mo.

* Returning starters indicated in CAPS

DEFENSE

DE	97	REECE WINKELMAN, 6-4, 245, Jr., Marshall, Minn.
	22	Tolu Ogunrinde, 6-1, 270, Sr., Cottage Grove, Minn.
	53	Caden Johnson, 6-3, 240, R-Fr., Wahoo, Neb.
DT	69	Krockett Krolikowski, 6-2, 290, Jr., Winner, S.D.
	98	Ryan Van Marel, 6-4, 285, So., Sheldon, Iowa
	52	Jarod DePriest, 6-5, 265, R-Fr., Trivoli, Ill.
NT	99	CALEB SANDERS, 6-1, 280, Jr., Glenwood, Iowa
	55	Thomas Stacker, 6-4, 285, Sr., Chicago, Ill.
	88	Brandon Lane Jr., 6-2, 245, Fr., Kansas City, Mo.
DE	48	Quinton Hicks, 6-3, 240, So., Wichita, Kan.
	94	Cade Terveer, 6-3, 245, So., Brandon, S.D.
	90	Randy Keumogne, 6-3, 220, Fr., Oakdale, Minn.
LB or (Will)	29	Graham Spalding, 6-1, 200, R-Fr., Oviedo, Fla.
	46	Preston Tetzlaff, 6-2, 215, Sr., Brookings, S.D.
	30	Payton Shafer, 6-0, 215, So., Cottage Grove, Minn.
LB or (Mike)	46	Preston Tetzlaff, 6-2, 215, Sr., Brookings, S.D.
	32	Adam Bock, 6-1, 210, R-Fr., Solon, Iowa
	44	Saiveon Williamson, 6-1, 210, So., Waseca, Minn.
LB (Sam)	12	LOGAN BACKHAUS, 6-4, 205, Sr., Spirit Lake, Iowa
	11	Matt Barnett, 6-3, 200, R-Fr., Cedar Rapids, Iowa
	57	Kinser Madison, 6-2, 210, So., Higginsville, Mo.
LCB	21	DON GARDNER, 6-1, 185, Sr., Chicago, Ill.
	36	Torren Union, 6-2, 195, R-Fr., Mesa, Ariz.
	28	Dalys Beanum, 6-1, 165, Fr., Omaha, Neb.
FS or	6	MICHAEL GRIFFIN II, 6-0, 6-0, 215, Jr., Cottage Grove, Minn.
	2	Isaiah Stalbird, 6-1, 200, So., Kearney, Neb.
SS or	35	Chase Norblade, 6-1, 185, So., Papillion, Neb.
	3	JOSHUA MANCHIGIAH, 6-0, 210, Jr., Papillion, Neb.
RCB or	1	Malik Lofton, 5-10, 190, Jr., Crystal, Minn.
	13	DYSHAWN GALES, 5-11, 185, So., North Chicago, Ill.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Long	48	Jaden Mueller, 6-1, 210, Fr., Johnston, Iowa
	33	Thomas Motzko, 6-0, 230, R-Fr., Highland Park, Ill.
Holder	49	BEN DINKEL, 5-10, 220, Jr., Kearney, Neb.
PK	97	Cole Frahm, 6-5, 225, Jr., Omaha, Neb.
	10	Hunter Dustman, 6-3, 215, Fr., East Bethel, Minn.
P	49	BEN DINKEL, 5-10, 220, Jr., Kearney, Neb.
	10	Hunter Dustman, 6-3, 215, Fr., East Bethel, Minn.
KO	97	Cole Frahm, 6-5, 225, Jr., Omaha, Neb.
	10	Hunter Dustman, 6-3, 215, Fr., East Bethel, Minn.
KOR	20	Pierre Strong, Jr., 5-11, 210, Jr., Little Rock, Ark.
	22	Isaiah Davis, 6-1, 220, Fr., Joplin, Mo.
KOR	9	Jadon Janke, 6-3, 210, So., Madison, S.D.
	8	Jordan Meachum, 5-8, 190, Grad., Lamott, Pa.
PR	10	JAXON JANKE, 6-2, 210, So. Madison, S.D.
	20	Pierre Strong, Jr., 5-11, 210, Jr., Little Rock, Ark.

COACHING STAFF

Head Coach: John Stiegelmeier
 Assistant Head Coach/Co-Defensive Coordinator/Linebackers: Jimmy Rogers
 Co-Defensive Coordinator/Safeties: Brian Bergstrom
 Offensive Coordinator/Offensive Line: Jason Eck
 Passing Game Coordinator/Wide Receivers: Luke Schleusner
 Special Teams Coordinator/Cornerbacks: Rob Erickson

Running Backs: John Johnson
 Quarterbacks: Zach Lujan
 Tight Ends: Ryan Olson
 Defensive Line: Christian Smith
 Assistant Defensive Line: Spencer Erickson
 Graduate Assistants: Jared Gallatin, Luke Munsterteiger, C.J. Butt



South Dakota State University

JACKRABBITS

2020-21 Football Roster

No.	NAME	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	HOMETOWN	No.	NAME	Pos	Ht	Wt	Yr	HOMETOWN
1	Malik Lofton	CB	5-10	190	Jr.	Crystal, Minn.	49	Ben Dinkel	P	5-10	220	Jr.	Kearney, Neb.
1	Rudy Voss	QB	6-3	200	Fr.	Lakefield, Minn.	50	Gus Miller	OL	6-3	265	Fr.	Brookings, S.D.
2	J'Bore Gibbs	QB	6-3	230	So.	Chicago, Ill.	51	Max VanMeter	DT	6-4	260	Fr.	Overland Park, Kan.
2	Isaiah Stalbird	S	6-1	200	So.	Kearney, Neb.	52	Jarod DePriest	DT	6-5	265	R-Fr.	Trivoli, Ill.
3	Joshua Manchigiah	S	6-0	210	R-Jr.	Papillion, Neb.	53	Caden Johnson	DE	6-3	240	R-Fr.	Wahoo, Neb.
4	Canyon Bauer	WR	6-0	195	R-Fr.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	54	Eddie Miller	OL	6-5	315	Sr.	Brookings, S.D.
6	Michael Griffin II	S	6-0	215	Sr.	Cottage Grove, Minn.	55	Thomas Stackner	DT	6-4	285	Sr.	Chicago, Ill.
7	Karst Hunter	ATH	6-4	205	R-Fr.	Miller, S.D.	56	Eagan Lickiss	OL	6-4	320	Sr.	Indianola, Iowa
8	Jordan Meachum	RB	5-8	190	Gr.	Lamott, Pa.	57	Kinser Madison	LB	6-2	210	So.	Higginsville, Mo.
9	Jadon Janke	WR	6-3	210	So.	Madison, S.D.	58	Alex Westendorf	OL	6-5	280	R-Fr.	South Elgin, Ill.
10	Jaxon Janke	WR	6-2	210	So.	Madison, S.D.	60	Mason McCormick	OL	6-4	300	So.	Sioux Falls, S.D.
11	Matt Barnett	LB	6-3	200	R-Fr.	Cedar Rapids, Iowa	61	Evan Beerntsen	OL	6-4	285	R-Fr.	De Pere, Wis.
11	Mark Gronowski	QB	6-3	200	Fr.	Naperville, Ill.	64	Ethan Vibert	OL	6-4	290	R-Fr.	Regina, Saskatchewan
12	Logan Backhaus	LB	6-4	205	Sr.	Spirit Lake, Iowa	65	Matthew Borowicz	DT	6-4	275	So.	Lakeville, Minn.
13	DyShawn Gales	CB	5-11	185	So.	North Chicago, Ill.	67	Brady Beck	OL	6-8	280	R-Fr.	Sioux Falls, S.D.
13	Keaton Heide	QB	6-3	195	So.	Wayzata, Minn.	68	Ian Bass	OL	6-4	285	So.	Rosemount, Minn.
15	Daeton Mcgaughy	S	6-0	200	Fr.	Elwood, Kan.	69	Krockett Krolikowski	DT	6-2	290	Jr.	Winner, S.D.
17	Abe Hoskins III	CB	6-2	175	Fr.	Omaha, Neb.	70	Colby Christensen	OL	6-8	240	Fr.	West Des Moines, Iowa
18	Corben Mahaffy	K	5-11	170	R-Fr.	Piedmont, S.D.	71	Aron Johnson	OL	6-6	295	Jr.	Chisago City, Minn.
19	Mason Leighton	WR	5-9	175	Jr.	Madison, S.D.	72	Jason Titus	OL	6-5	285	Jr.	Andover, Minn.
20	Pierre Strong, Jr.	RB	5-11	210	Jr.	Little Rock, Ark.	73	Trajan Walhof	OL	6-5	285	So.	Sioux Center, Iowa
21	Don Gardner	CB	6-1	185	Sr.	Chicago, Ill.	74	Garret Greenfield	OL	6-6	295	So.	Rock Valley, Iowa
22	Tolu Ogunrinde	DE	6-1	270	Sr.	Cottage Grove, Minn.	75	Jon Gruetzmacher	OL	6-8	310	Jr.	Merrill, Wis.
22	Isaiah Davis	RB	6-1	220	Fr.	Joplin, Mo.	76	Bo Donald	OL	6-6	300	R-Fr.	Kimball, S.D.
23	Shane Dailey Jr.	WR	5-9	160	R-Fr.	Omaha, Neb.	77	Wes Genant	OL	6-4	295	Sr.	Parkston, S.D.
24	Deyon Campbell	WR	5-9	195	Jr.	Minneapolis, Minn.	79	Jhareth Bloomerader	OL	6-6	270	R-Fr.	Highmore, S.D.
25	Cale Reeder	S	6-0	185	Fr.	Yorkville, Ill.	80	Nate Sullivan Jr.	WR	6-2	175	Fr.	Bellevue, Neb.
27	Marlon Wiley	WR	5-10	180	R-Fr.	Jordan, Minn.	81	Skylar Cavanaugh	TE	6-5	240	Sr.	Vail, Ariz.
28	Dalys Beanum	CB	6-1	165	Fr.	Omaha, Neb.	82	Caleb Schauf	TE	6-5	245	Jr.	Sparta, Wis.
29	Graham Spalding	LB	6-1	200	R-Fr.	Oviedo, Fla.	83	A.J. Coons	WR	6-4	190	Fr.	Solon, Iowa
30	Payton Shafer	LB	6-0	215	So.	Cottage Grove, Minn.	85	Tucker Kraft	TE	6-5	250	R-Fr.	Timber Lake, S.D.
32	Adam Bock	LB	6-1	210	R-Fr.	Solon, Iowa	86	Devon Cole Jr.	WR	5-9	160	Fr.	Clermont, Fla.
33	Thomas Motzko	LB	6-0	230	R-Fr.	Highland Park, Ill.	87	Zach Heins	TE	6-7	260	So.	Sioux Falls, S.D.
34	Mike Morgan	TE/FB	6-3	235	So.	New Lenox, Ill.	88	Blake Kunz	TE	6-5	255	Jr.	Germantown, Wis.
35	Chase Norblade	S	6-1	185	So.	Papillion, Neb.	89	Wyatt Seagren	TE	6-7	245	Fr.	Oakland, Neb.
36	Torren Union	CB	6-2	195	R-Fr.	Mesa, Ariz.	90	Randy Keumogne	DE	6-3	220	Fr.	Oakdale, Minn.
37	Jefferson Lee, V	RB	5-9	190	So.	Marshall, Minn.	91	Xavier Ward	DT	6-2	285	Sr.	Freeman, S.D.
39	Steven Arrell	CB	6-2	185	Fr.	Brooklyn Park, Minn.	92	Kevin Brenner	DE	6-3	235	R-Fr.	Silver Lake, Wis.
40	Aaron Kusler	LB	6-2	205	Fr.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	93	Max Baloun	DE	6-6	225	Fr.	Redfield, S.D.
41	Avian Thomas	RB	5-10	185	Fr.	Boonville, Mo.	94	Cade Terveer	DE	6-3	245	So.	Brandon, S.D.
42	Davion Sterner	LB	6-0	190	Fr.	Alvord, Iowa	95	Zac Wilson	DE	6-3	220	R-Fr.	Chipley, Fla.
43	Adam Kusler	LB	6-3	205	Fr.	Sioux Falls, S.D.	96	Mitch Eichacker	DE	6-4	225	Fr.	Sioux Falls, S.D.
44	Saiveon Williamson	LB	6-1	210	So.	Waseca, Minn.	97	Reece Winkelman	DE	6-4	245	Jr.	Marshall, Minn.
45	Caleb Franci	LB	6-0	190	Fr.	Grand Island, Neb.	97	Cole Frahm	K	6-5	225	Jr.	Omaha, Neb.
46	Preston Tetzlaff	LB	6-2	215	Sr.	Brookings, S.D.	98	Ryan Van Marel	DT	6-4	285	So.	Sheldon, Iowa
47	Michael Drotzmann	P	6-3	195	R-Fr.	Yankton, S.D.	99	Caleb Sanders	DT	6-1	280	Jr.	Glenwood, Iowa
48	Quinton Hicks	DE	6-3	240	So.	Wichita, Kan.							



JOHN STIEGELMEIER

Head Coach

24th Season (167-106 record — all at SDSU)

Alma Mater: South Dakota State, 1979

FOOTBALL HONORS AND RECORDS:

- Ranks first on SDSU career football coaching victories list with 167-106 record (.612 winning percentage) in 24 seasons — passed Ralph Ginn, who compiled a 113-89-9 record in 22 seasons from 1947-68, with 41-3 victory over UW-Oshkosh on Sept. 20, 2014
- Has led teams to winning records in 19 of his 23 full seasons, including 14 of 16 at the Division I Football Championship Subdivision level
- Since moving to the Football Championship Subdivision in 2004, the Jackrabbits have a 125-73 overall record (.631 winning percentage)
- His 67 victories in Missouri Valley Football Conference play rank second in league history, while his 99 overall wins since joining the league in 2008 are tied for third among all-time league coaches
- 1999 North Central Conference Coach of the Year
- 2007 Great West Football Conference Coach of the Year after leading SDSU to first conference title in 44 years
- 2016 Bruce Craddock Missouri Valley Football Conference Coach of the Year after leading team to first MVFC title
- 2007 American Football Coaches Association FCS Region 5 Coach of the Year
- 2016 AFCA FCS Region 4 Coach of the Year
- Liberty Mutual Coach of the Year Finalist in 2007 and 2009
- 2014 recipient of the Ralph Ginn Award for Coaching Excellence at South Dakota State University
- 2015 finalist for STATS FCS Coach of the Year Award

PLAYOFF EXPERIENCE:

- Has led Jackrabbits to nine FCS playoff appearances (2009, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) and has an 8-9 playoff record
- 2009: Montana 61, SDSU 48
- 2012: *SDSU 58, Eastern Illinois 10; North Dakota State 28, SDSU 3
- 2013: SDSU 26, Northern Arizona 7; Eastern Washington 41, SDSU 17
- 2014: SDSU 47, Montana State 40; North Dakota State 27, SDSU 24
- 2015: Montana 24, SDSU 17
- 2016: *SDSU 10, Villanova 7; North Dakota State 36, SDSU 10
- 2017: *SDSU 37, Northern Iowa 22; *SDSU 56, New Hampshire 14; James Madison 51, SDSU 16
- 2018: *SDSU 51, Duquesne 6; SDSU 27, Kennesaw State 17; North Dakota State 44, SDSU 21
- 2019: *Northern Iowa 13, SDSU 10
- * denotes home playoff game
- Served as a student assistant on SDSU's lone NCAA Division II playoff-qualifying team in 1979

OTHER NOTES:

- The Jackrabbits have compiled a 106-32 (.768) home record in Coach Stig's 23 seasons as head coach
- SDSU has a 223-145 (.606) overall record since Coach Stig joined the coaching staff as an full-time assistant in 1988 and has posted a winning record in 26 of 32 seasons
- Served as secondary coach and recruiting coordinator from 1988-90 under Wayne Haensel
- Served as defensive coordinator from 1991-96 under Mike Daly
- Jackrabbit student-athletes have earned CoSIDA Academic All-America recognition 25 times
- SDSU received the MVFC Team Academic Award each of its first nine seasons in the league

MILESTONE WINS:

- No. 1: SDSU 17, UC Davis 7 [first game as head coach] (Sept. 13, 1997 at Davis, Calif.)
- No. 2 [first home win and first NCC victory]: SDSU 20, St. Cloud State 16 (Oct. 11, 1997, at Brookings)
- No. 25: SDSU 34, Ferris State (Mich.) 24 (Sept. 1, 2001, at Brookings)
- No. 45 [first win over FCS opponent]: SDSU 31, Southern (La.) 24 (Sept. 25, 2004, at Baton Rouge, La.)
- No. 50: SDSU 69, Valparaiso (Ind.) 6 (Sept. 10, 2005, at Brookings)
- No. 69 [first MVFC victory]: SDSU 40, Youngstown State 7 (Sept. 6, 2008, at Brookings)
- No. 75: SDSU 25, North Dakota State 24 (Nov. 22, 2008, at Fargo, N.D.)
- No. 100: SDSU 16, Southern Illinois 12 (Nov. 3, 2012, at Carbondale, Ill.)
- No. 102 [first playoff victory]: SDSU 58, Eastern Illinois 10 (Nov. 24, 2012, at Brookings)
- No. 113 [SDSU record-tying victory]: SDSU 26, Southern Utah 6 (Sept. 13, 2014, at Cedar City, Utah)
- No. 114 [SDSU record-breaking victory]: SDSU 41, UW-Oshkosh 3 (Sept. 20, 2014, at Brookings)
- No. 125: SDSU 38, Youngstown State 8 (Oct. 17, 2015, at Youngstown, Ohio)
- No. 136 [clinch first MVFC title]: SDSU 45, Northern Iowa 24 (Nov. 19, 2016, at Cedar Falls, Iowa)
- No. 142 [100th win as FCS program]: SDSU 62, Missouri State 30 (Oct. 21, 2017, at Springfield, Mo.)
- No. 150: SDSU 90, Arkansas-Pine Bluff 6 (Sept. 15, 2018, at Brookings)

COACH STIG'S YEAR-BY-YEAR RECORDS

NORTH CENTRAL CONFERENCE

YEAR	OVERALL	CONF
1997	4-6	3-6
1998	6-5	5-4
1999	8-3	6-3
2000	6-5	4-5
2001	5-6	4-4
2002	6-4	4-4
2003	7-4	4-3
TOTALS	42-33	30-29

GREAT WEST FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

YEAR	OVERALL	CONF
2004	6-5	2-3
2005	6-5	3-2
2006	7-4	3-1
2007	7-4	4-0
TOTALS	26-18	12-6

MISSOURI VALLEY FOOTBALL

CONFERENCE

YEAR	OVERALL	CONF
2008	7-5	6-2
2009	8-4	7-1
2010	5-6	4-4
2011	5-6	4-4
2012	9-4	6-2
2013	9-5	5-3
2014	9-5	5-3
2015	8-4	5-3
2016	9-4	7-1
2017	11-3	6-2
2018	10-3	6-2
2019	8-5	5-3
2020-21	1-1	1-1
TOTALS	99-55	67-31
OVERALL TOTALS	167-106	109-66

JACKRABBITS TO WATCH



12-LOGAN BACKHAUS

6-4, 205, Senior • Linebacker

Spirit Lake, Iowa (Spirit Lake H.S.)

FOOTBALL HONORS AND HIGHLIGHTS:

- Team Captain (2019, 2020-21)
- Missouri Valley Football Conference Honorable Mention (2019)
- MVFC All-Newcomer Team (2017)
- MVFC All-Academic Second Team (2019)
- MVFC Commissioner's Academic Excellence Award (2017, 2018, 2019)
- MVFC Honor Roll (2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)

LOGAN BACKHAUS' CAREER STATISTICS

YEAR	G	SOLO	AST	TOTAL	TFL-Yds	SACK-Yds	PBU	INT-Yds	BK	FR-Yds	FF
2017	12	42	13	55	5.0-8	1.0-3	2	2-5	0	0-0	2
2018	13	40	21	61	4.0-14	1.0-5	3	2-0	1	1-0	0
2019	13	45	34	79	5.5-13	1.0-3	5	4-0	1	0-0	3
2020-21	2	10	6	11	3.0-5	0-0	0	0-0	0	0-0	0
CAREER	40	137	74	211	17.5-40	3.0-11	10	8-5	2	1-0	5

LOGAN BACKHAUS' 2017 GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Game	Solo	Ast	Total	TFL-Yds	Sack-Yds	Int-Yds	FF	FR
Duquesne	3	0	3	0-0	0-0	1-0	0	0
Montana State	5	2	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Drake	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	1-5	0	0
Youngstown St.	4	2	6	1.0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0
Southern Illinois	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Northern Iowa	6	1	7	1.0-3	1.0-3	0-0	1	0
Missouri State		DNP						
Western Illinois		DNP						
North Dakota St.	4	0	4	1.0-2	0-0	0-0	0	0
Illinois State	4	1	5	1.0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0
South Dakota	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Northern Iowa	8	0	8	1.0-1	0-0	0-0	1	0
New Hampshire	0	0	0	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
James Madison	5	3	8	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Season Totals	42	13	55	5.0-8	1.0-3	2-5	2	0

LOGAN BACKHAUS' 2019 GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Game	Solo	Ast	Total	TFL-Yds	Sack-Yds	Int-Yds	FF	FR
Minnesota	3	5	8	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Long Island	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Drake	4	2	6	0-0	0-0	1-0	0	0
Southern Utah	6	5	11	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Southern Illinois	5	6	11	1.5-5	1.0-3	0-0	0	0
Youngstown St.	8	0	8	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	0
Indiana State	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	0
North Dakota St.	2	1	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Missouri State	4	2	6	1.0-2	0-0	0-0	0	0
Illinois State	2	4	6	1.0-3	0-0	1-0	0	0
Northern Iowa	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	1-0	0	0
South Dakota	3	0	3	0-0	0-0	1-0	0	0
Northern Iowa	4	2	6	2.0-3	0-0	0-0	1	0
Season Totals	45	34	79	5.5-13	1.0-3	4-0	3	0

LOGAN BACKHAUS' 2018 GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Game	Solo	Ast	Total	TFL-Yds	Sack-Yds	Int-Yds	FF	FR
Montana State	2	0	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Ark.-Pine Bluff	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1
North Dakota St.	3	0	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Indiana State	4	1	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Youngstown St.	3	3	6	1.0-4	0-0	0-0	0	0
Northern Iowa	2	0	2	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Illinois State	2	3	5	0.5-1	0-0	0-0	0	0
Missouri State	5	0	5	0-0	0-0	1-0	0	0
Southern Illinois	3	4	7	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
South Dakota	3	2	5	0.5-1	0-0	0-0	0	0
Duquesne	3	4	7	1.0-5	1.0-5	0-0	0	0
Kennesaw State	6	0	6	1.0-3	0-0	1-0	0	0
North Dakota St.	3	2	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Season Totals	40	21	61	4.0-14	1.0-5	2-0	0	1

LOGAN BACKHAUS' 2020-21 GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Game	Solo	Ast	Total	TFL-Yds	Sack-Yds	Int-Yds	FF	FR
Northern Iowa	5	0	5	2.0-3	0-0	0-0	0	0
North Dakota	5	6	11	1.0-2	0-0	0-0	0	0
Season Totals	10	6	16	3.0-5	0-0	0-0	0	0



20-PIERRE STRONG, JR. 5-11, 200, Junior • Running Back Little Rock, Arkansas (McClellan H.S.)

FOOTBALL HONORS AND HIGHLIGHTS:

- Team Captain (2020-21)
- HERO Sports All-America Second Team (2019)
- Associated Press All-America Third Team (2019)
- Phil Steele All-America Third Team (2019)
- HERO Sports FCS Freshman All-America First Team (2018)
- Phil Steele FCS Freshman All-America Second Team (2018)
- All-Missouri Valley Football Conference First Team (2019)
- MVFC Freshman of the Year (2018)
- MVFC All-Newcomer Team (2018)
- MVFC Newcomer of the Week (Nov. 10, 2018; Nov. 17, 2018)
- Topped the 100-yard mark in five of the team's last six games in 2018 and nine times in his career (two games with 200-plus yards)
- Scored a touchdown in final six games of the 2018 season, including three-touchdown performances at Southern Illinois (Nov. 10) and versus South Dakota (Nov. 17)
- Reached 1,000-yard mark on 100th carry of the 2018 season
- Posted 10th-best single-game rushing performance in school history with 253 yards on 17 carries in 2018 regular season finale versus South Dakota
- Moved into 10th place in career rushing at SDSU in Feb. 27, 2021, game at North Dakota
- His 19 career touchdown runs have covered an average of 33.7 yards

SDSU CAREER RUSHING

1. Josh Ranek, 1997-2001	6,744
2. Zach Zenner, 2011-14	6,548
3. Kyle Minett, 2007-10	4,277
4. Anthony Watson, 2003-06	3,712
5. Dan Sonnek, 1984-87	3,304
6. Les Tuma, 1970-73	3,018
7. Cory Koenig, 2004-07	2,990
8. Brady Mengarelli, 2014-17	2,677
9. Darwin Gonnerman, 1966-68	2,598
10. Pierre Strong, Jr., 2018-present	2,320

PIERRE STRONG'S CAREER STATISTICS

Year	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LG	Rec	Yds	TD	LG	KOR	Yds	Avg	TD	LG
2018	117	1,116	9.5	11	*73	6	84	1	*66	2	38	19.0	0	24
2019	143	1,018	7.1	8	*64	14	169	1	*45	2	69	34.5	0	47
2020-21	39	186	4.1	0	32	6	31	1	11	1	20	20.0	0	20
Career	299	2,320	7.8	19	*73	26	284	3	*66	5	127	25.4	0	47

* denotes touchdown

PIERRE STRONG'S 2018 GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Game	Rush	Yds	TD	LG	Rec	Yds	TD	LG	KOR	Yds	TD	LG
Montana State	2	40	0	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arkansas-Pine Bluff	5	40	0	19	1	66	1	*66	0	0	0	0
North Dakota State	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indiana State	6	95	0	69	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youngstown State	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Iowa	8	6	0	3	1	5	0	5	0	0	0	0
Illinois State	5	17	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Missouri State	9	136	2	*55	1	9	0	9	1	14	0	14
Southern Illinois	14	188	3	*72	0	0	0	0	1	24	0	24
South Dakota	17	253	3	*73	1	4	0	4	0	0	0	0
Duquesne	12	92	1	*52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kennesaw State	18	112	1	23	1	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Dakota State	20	135	1	*30	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
Season Totals	117	1,116	11	*73	6	84	1	*66	2	38	0	24

JACKRABBITS TO WATCH

SINGLE-GAME RUSHING YARDS

- Zach Zenner33 carries, 295 yds.
• vs. Eastern Illinois, 11-24-2012 [FCS playoffs]
Zach Zenner37 carries, 295 yds.
• at North Dakota, 9-7-2013
- Josh Ranek41 carries, 291 yds.
• vs. St. Cloud State, 11-13-1999
- Josh Ranek39 carries, 282 yds.
• at North Dakota State, 10-24-1998
- Zach Zenner34 carries, 278 yds.
• at Southeastern Louisiana, 9-8-2012
- Dan Sonnek41 carries, 268 yds.
• vs. Northern Colorado, 11-16-1985
- Dan Sonnek40 carries, 266 yds.
• vs. Augustana, 10-26-1985
- Cory Koenig21 carries, 259 yds.
• vs. Cal Poly, 10-20-2007
- Josh Ranek26 carries, 254 yds.
• at North Dakota State, 10-20-2001
- Pierre Strong, Jr.17 carries, 253 yds.
• vs. South Dakota, 11-17-2018

PIERRE STRONG'S 2019 GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Game	Rush	Yds	TD	LG	Rec	Yds	TD	LG	KOR	Yds	TD	LG
Minnesota	12	53	0	13	2	59	0	39	1	47	0	47
Long Island	12	55	1	14	2	20	0	20	0	0	0	0
Drake	11	129	1	*49	1	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southern Utah	11	85	1	30	2	47	1	*45	0	0	0	0
Southern Illinois	20	229	1	*64	1	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Youngstown State	8	61	0	41	3	33	0	15	0	0	0	0
Indiana State	17	144	2	28	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
North Dakota State	19	120	0	24	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Missouri State	18	99	1	32	1	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Illinois State	12	29	1	7	0	0	0	0	1	22	0	22
Northern Iowa	3	14	0	8	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
South Dakota	DNP-Injury											
Northern Iowa	DNP-Injury											
Season Totals	143	1,018	8	*64	14	169	0	*45	2	69	0	47

PIERRE STRONG'S 2020-21 GAME-BY-GAME STATISTICS

Game	Rush	Yds	TD	LG	Rec	Yds	TD	LG	KOR	Yds	TD	LG
Northern Iowa	20	91	0	32	6	31	1	11	1	20	0	20
North Dakota	17	95	0	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Season Totals	37	186	0	32	6	31	1	11	1	20	0	20

LAST MEETING WITH WESTERN ILLINOIS — OCT. 28, 2017

#8/11 SDSU 52, #12/14 WESTERN ILLINOIS 24

Oct. 28, 2017 • Hanson Field (Att.: 2,247)

MACOMB, Illinois – South Dakota State quarterback Taryn Christion accounted for six touchdowns, including three scoring passes to Jake Wieneke, to lead the Jackrabbits to a 52-24 victory over Western Illinois in a battle of nationally ranked teams Saturday afternoon at Hanson Field.

The Jackrabbits, ranked eighth by the Football Championship Subdivision coaches and 11th in the STATS media poll, improved to 6-2 overall and 3-2 in the Missouri Valley Football Conference. WIU dropped to 5-3 overall and 2-3 in league play.

The reigning MVFC Offensive Player of the Year, Christion matched a career high with five touchdown passes as he finished the day 26-of-41 for a season-high 386 yards. He connected with Marquise Lewis in the end zone for a 30-yard touchdown on the opening drive of the game to give SDSU an early 7-0 lead.

Western Illinois scored the next 10 points to grab its only lead of the day. Nathan Erickson kicked a 45-yard field goal on the Leathernecks' first possession and WIU turned an interception of Christion by Quentin Moon into quick points as Steve McShane capped a two-play, 11-yard drive with a 6-yard touchdown run.

Chase Vinatieri knotted the game at 10-all late in the first quarter with a 30-yard field.

From there, it was all Jackrabbits. Christion hooked up with Wieneke on scoring passes of 13 and 1 yards in the second quarter, which were sandwiched around a 39-yard run by McShane, to give SDSU a 24-17 halftime lead.

SDSU took full control of the contest by outscoring Western Illinois 21-0 in the third quarter. Lewis scored his second touchdown of the game by taking a short pass along the right sideline and then broke a pair of tackles while staying inbounds for a 46-yard score. That capped an eight-play, 87-yard drive in which the Jackrabbits converted on third-and-15 deep in their own territory.

Mikey Daniel scored on a 2-yard run and the Jackrabbits took advantage of a fumble to push the margin to 45-17 on a 6-yard pitch and catch from Christion to Wieneke.

After McShane scored his third touchdown of the day on a 47-yard pass from Sean McGuire, Christion tallied his final score of the day with a quarterback keeper around right end for a 1-yard touchdown.

SDSU held a 579-285 advantage in total offense. All-America tight end Dallas Goedert went over the 100-yard mark for the third game in a row with eight catches for 113 yards. Wieneke finished with season highs of eight catches for 97 yards as he took over third place on the FCS career charts with 54 touchdown receptions.

Brady Mengarelli led the Jackrabbit rushing attack with 70 yards on 12 carries, while Daniel rushed 12 times for 66 yards and Christion added 37 yards on eight attempts.

Christian Rozeboom, who recovered the third-quarter fumble and added an interception in the fourth quarter, registered 10 tackles. Jordan Brown forced a fumble and contributed eight tackles.

For WIU, McShane racked up 90 rushing yards on 12 carries and caught three passes for 66 yards. McGuire completed 13-of-20 passes for 155 yards, while Jaelon Acklin contributed six catches for 59 yards.



Taryn Christion earned MVFC and STATS FCS national offensive player of the week honors after tying a career high with five touchdown passes Oct. 28 at Western Illinois.

Brett Taylor finished with a game-high 14 tackles for Western Illinois, followed by 13 for David Griffith.

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1	2	3	4	FINAL
South Dakota State (6-2, 3-2)	10	14	21	7	52
Western Illinois (5-3, 2-3)	10	7	0	7	24

SCORING SUMMARY

1st	12:13	SDSU – Marquise Lewis 30 yd pass from Taryn Christion (Chase Vinatieri kick)
	6:29	WIU – Nathan Erickson 45 yd field goal
	5:40	WIU – Steve McShane 6 yd run (Sam Crosa kick)
	2:08	SDSU – Vinatieri 30 yd field goal
2nd	8:55	SDSU – Jake Wieneke 13 yd pass from Christion (Vinatieri kick)
	5:06	WIU – McShane 39 yd run (Crosa kick)
	00:55	SDSU – Wieneke 1 yd pass from Christion (Vinatieri kick)
3rd	8:37	SDSU – Lewis 46 yd pass from Christion (Vinatieri kick)
	3:23	SDSU – Mikey Daniel 2 yd run (Vinatieri kick)
	1:48	SDSU – Wieneke 6 yd pass from Christion (Vinatieri kick)
4th	14:51	WIU – McShane 47 yd pass from Sean McGuire (Crosa kick)
	9:13	SDSU – Christion 1 yd run (Vinatieri kick)

TEAM STATISTICS	SDSU	WIU
FIRST DOWNS	31	16
RUSHES-YARDS (NET)	39-193	22-130
PASSING YDS (NET)	385	155
Passes Att-Comp-Int	41-26-1	22-13-1
TOTAL OFFENSE PLAYS-YARDS	80-579	44-285
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-32	7-167
Interception Returns-Yards	1-0	1-22
Punts (Number-Avg)	2-39.0	5-32.0
Fumbles-Lost	0-0	1-1
Penalties-Yards	6-65	13-89
Possession Time	36:44	23:16
Third-Down Conversions	7 of 11	2 of 8
Fourth-Down Conversions	1 of 1	0 of 0
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	6-6	2-2
Sacks By: Number-Yards	0-0	0-0

RUSHING LEADERS: SDSU – Brady Mengarelli 12-70; Mikey Daniel 12-66; Taryn Christion 8-37; Isaac Wallace 5-22. WIU – Steve McShane 12-90; Max Norris 4-24. **PASSING LEADERS:** SDSU – Taryn Christion 26-41-1 386. WIU – Sean McGuire 13-20-1 155; Connor Sampson 0-2-0 0.

RECEIVING LEADERS: SDSU – Dallas Goedert 8-113; Jake Wieneke 8-97; Adam Anderson 3-33. WIU – Jaelon Acklin 6-59; Steve McShane 3-66. **INTERCEPTIONS:** SDSU – Christian Rozeboom 1-0. WIU – Quentin Moon 1-22. **SACKS:** SDSU – none. WIU – none. **TACKLE LEADERS (UA-A-TOT):** SDSU – Christian Rozeboom 5-5-10; Jordan Brown 7-1-8; Nick Farina 3-3-6. WIU – Brett Taylor 7-7-14; David Griffith 7-6-13; Quentin Moon 4-4-8.

#5 SDSU 24, #3 NORTHERN IOWA 20

Feb. 19, 2021 • UNI-Dome (Att.: 2,137)

CEDAR FALLS, Iowa – Freshman quarterback Mark Gronowski threw for two touchdowns in his collegiate debut, including the game-winning 1-yard pass to Pierre Strong, Jr., with 19 seconds remaining as fifth-ranked South Dakota State recovered late for a 24-20 season-opening win at third-ranked Northern Iowa.

A native of Naperville, Illinois, Gronowski led the Jackrabbits on a 10-play, 75-yard game-winning drive that consumed more than five minutes. SDSU, which had not picked up first down in its five previous second-half drives, moved the chains three times before the decisive score, the last coming on a 43-yard pass from Gronowski to tight end Zach Heins down the left sideline to the UNI 3.

After a pair of Strong rushes moved the ball to the 1, the Jackrabbit running back slipped across the formation to the right flat and hauled in the pass from Gronowski for a 23-20 SDSU lead. Cole Frahm added the extra point to force the Panthers to drive the length of the field, but the last-ditch drive by UNI failed to get past the Panthers' own 40.

UNI grabbed a 20-17 lead by scoring the first 13 points of the second half. Matthew Cook booted a 43-yard field goal in the third quarter and added a 35-yarder with 8:35 to play in regulation. Moments later, the Panthers cashed in on SDSU's second lost fumble of the game on a strip sack of Gronowski that was recovered at the SDSU 19. Two plays later, Panther quarterback Will McElvain connected with Tysen Kershaw on a 14-yard touchdown.

SDSU statistically dominated the first half in building a 17-7 lead at intermission. The Jackrabbits marched 71 yards on eight plays on the game's opening drive before settling for a 24-yard field goal by Frahm.

UNI took its first lead later in the first quarter on a 7-yard touchdown run by McElvain, capping a seven-play, 52-yard drive. McElvain completed 19-of-29 attempts for 164 yards, with Quan Hampton hauling in a game-high seven catches for 45 yards.

Gronowski accounted for a pair of touchdowns in three-plus minute span late in the first half. First, he hooked up with Jaxon Janke for a 6-yard touchdown, then he used his legs to score on a 5-yard run with 1 minute and 24 seconds remaining in the opening half. His rushing touchdown was set up by a blocked punt by newcomer Isaiah Stalbird that gave SDSU the ball at the Panther 5.

Gronowski also finished the night 19-for-29 passing for 194 yards and added 24 rushing yards on 10 carries. Strong tallied 91 yards on 22 rushing attempts and led SDSU with six receptions, including the game-winner, for 31 yards. Heins added five catches for a team-high 90 receiving yards.

SDSU finished with a 310-193 advantage in total offense, with UNI limited to only 28 net yards on the ground in 25 attempts. Linebackers Logan Backhaus, Adam Bock and Preston Tetzlaff, along with cornerback Don Gardner, each registered five tackles to lead the Jackrabbits. Two of Backhaus' tackles were for loss.

Korby Sander of UNI led all players with 13 tackles.



Mark Gronowski accounted for all three South Dakota State touchdowns in his collegiate debut, a 24-20 Jackrabbit victory.

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1	2	3	4	FINAL
South Dakota State (1-0, 1-0)	3	14	0	7	24
Northern Iowa (0-1, 0-1)	7	0	3	10	20

SCORING SUMMARY

1st	10:16	SDSU – Cole Frahm 24 yd field goal
1st	3:05	UNI – Will McElvain 7 yd run (Matthew Cook kick)
2nd	5:14	SDSU – Jaxon Janke 6 yd pass from Mark Gronowski (Frahm kick)
2nd	1:24	SDSU – Gronowski 5 yd run (Frahm kick)
3rd	5:32	UNI – Cook 43 yd field goal
4th	8:35	UNI – Cook 35 yd field goal
4th	5:59	UNI – Tysen Kershaw 14 yd pass from McElvain (Cook kick)
4th	00:19	SDSU – Pierre Strong, Jr. 1 yd pass from Gronowski (Frahm kick)

TEAM STATISTICS

	SDSU	UNI
FIRST DOWNS	14	13
RUSHES-YARDS (NET)	34-116	25-28
PASSING YDS (NET)	194	165
Passes Att-Comp-Int	29-19-0	29-19-0
TOTAL OFFENSE PLAYS-YARDS	63-310	54-193
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Punt Returns-Yards	2-33	2-11
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-46	0-0
Interception Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Punts (Number-Avg)	5-40.6	7-38.3
Fumbles-Lost	2-2	0-0
Penalties-Yards	9-80	4-20
Possession Time	33:14	26:46
Third-Down Conversions	5 of 13	2 of 12
Fourth-Down Conversions	0 of 1	0 of 0
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	4-5	3-3
Sacks By: Number-Yards	2-15	2-8

RUSHING LEADERS: SDSU - Pierre Strong, Jr. 22-91; Mark Gronowski 10-24; Isaiah Davis 1-2. UNI - Dom Williams 14-28; Nick McCabe 4-0; Will McElvain 7-0. **PASSING LEADERS:** SDSU - Mark Gronowski 19-29-0 194. UNI - Will McElvain 19-29-0 165. **RECEIVING LEADERS:** SDSU - Pierre Strong, Jr. 6-31; Zach Heins 5-90; Jaxon Janke 4-29. UNI - Quan Hampton 7-65; Deion McShane 4-36; Nick Phillips 3-16; Tysen Kershaw 2-34; Kyle Fourtenbary 2-9. **INTERCEPTIONS:** SDSU - none. UNI - none. **SACKS:** SDSU - Tolu Ogunrinde 1.0-8; Adam Bock 1.0-7. UNI - Jared Brinkman 1.0-7; Brawntae Wells 0.5-1; Korby Sander 0.5-0. **TACKLE LEADERS (UA-A-TOT):** SDSU - Preston Tetzlaff 5-0-5; Logan Backhaus 5-0-5; Adam Bock 4-1-5; Don Gardner 3-2-5. UNI - Korby Sander 8-5-13; Spencer Cuvelier 3-6-9; Benny Sapp 3-4-7; Brawntae Wells 3-3-6; Eric Mooney 3-3-6.

WEEK 2 RECAP

#14 NORTH DAKOTA 28, #3 SDSU 17

Feb. 27, 2021 • Alerus Center 3,638

GRAND FORKS, N.D. – No. 14 North Dakota controlled the second half, scoring three touchdowns en route to a 28-17 victory over third-ranked South Dakota State Feb. 27 at the Alerus Center.

UND improved to 2-0 both overall and in the Missouri Valley Football Conference. The Jackrabbits dropped to 1-1.

Early on, SDSU executed the vertical passing game to build an early lead. On the second play from scrimmage, freshman quarterback Mark Gronowski connected with Jadon Janke on a 49-yard pass play to the UND 18. Three plays later, Jadon Janke's twin brother, Jaxon, took a screen pass 18 yards to the end zone to finish off the opening drive of the game.

Special teams were key throughout the game, with the Fighting Hawks successfully executing a fake punt to extend their first scoring drive. A pass from punter Cade Peterson to Garrett Maag went for 23 yards and a first down to the midfield stripe. Otis Weah capped the methodical, 15-play drive with a 1-yard touchdown run.

The Jackrabbits, however, had a quick answer as, on the first play of the ensuing drive, Gronowski hit Jaxon Janke deep over the middle for a 76-yard touchdown.

The score would remain 14-7 in favor of the Jackrabbits until the third quarter. UND took the second-half kickoff and marched 75 yards on eight plays, tying the game at 14-all on a 1-yard touchdown run by Luke Skokna. He set up the touchdown with a 43-yard run earlier in the drive.

Once again SDSU responded, this time settling for a 39-yard field goal and a 17-14 lead after a 45-yard pass from Gronowski to Jadon Janke on the first play of the drive. Jadon Janke tallied career highs of five catches for 109 yards, with Jaxon Janke also finishing with a career day of seven catches for 161 yards.

From there it was all UND.

The Fighting Hawks turned the momentum firmly in their favor with another special teams play, blocking a punt and taking over at the SDSU 18. UND needed only two plays to take its first lead with Maag catching a 16-yard touchdown pass from Tommy Schuster.

UND made it a two-score game with the help of a fortuitous bounce of the ball on the Alerus Center turf midway through the fourth quarter. Weah broke around right end for a big gain, but was stripped of the football by the Jackrabbits' Isaiah Stalbird at the 6-yard line. The ball, however, bounced right back into Weah's hands as he fell into the end zone. The result: a 40-yard touchdown run and a 28-17 UND lead.

The Fighting Hawk defense rose to the occasion, as well, forcing two fourth-quarter turnovers and three for the game. UND also recorded three sacks in the game.

SDSU finished with a 405-384 advantage in total offense as Gronowski finished the afternoon 16-of-32 passing for 309 yards. Pierre Strong, Jr. led the Jackrabbits on the ground with 95 yards on 17 carries.

For UND, Schuster completed 20-of-32 passes for 184 yards, with Maag catching five passes for 87 yards. Weah finished with 88 rushing yards on 17 carries, with Skokna adding 73 yards on 10 attempts.

Logan Backhaus tallied a game-high 11 tackles for the Jackrabbits. Preston Tetzlaff contributed a career-high 10 tackles and an interception.

Noah Larson paced UND with seven tackles



Jaxon Janke recorded career highs of seven receptions and 161 receiving yards while scoring both Jackrabbit touchdowns in a Feb. 27 road loss at North Dakota.

SCORE BY QUARTERS	1	2	3	4	FINAL
South Dakota State (1-1, 1-1)	14	0	3	0	17
North Dakota (2-0, 2-0)	7	0	14	7	28

SCORING SUMMARY

1st	12:58	SDSU	–	Jaxon Janke 18 yd pass from Mark Gronowski (Cole Frahm kick)
1st	1:00	UND	–	Otis Weah 1 yd run (Adam Stage kick)
1st	00:45	SDSU	–	Jaxon Janke 76 yd pass from Gronowski (Frahm kick)
3rd	10:28	UND	–	Luke Skokna 1 yd run (Stage kick)
3rd	6:46	SDSU	–	Frahm 39 yd field goal
3rd	00:17	UND	–	Garrett Maag 16 yd pass from Tommy Schuster (Stage kick)
4th	6:53	UND	–	Otis Weah 40 yd run (Stage kick)

TEAM STATISTICS

	SDSU	UND
FIRST DOWNS	16	19
RUSHES-YARDS (NET)	26-96	39-177
PASSING YDS (NET)	309	207
Passes Att-Comp-Int	32-16-2	34-21-1
TOTAL OFFENSE PLAYS-YARDS	58-405	73-384
Fumble Returns-Yards	0-0	0-0
Punt Returns-Yards	0-0	1-7
Kickoff Returns-Yards	2-52	2-59
Interception Returns-Yards	1-0	2-7
Punts (Number-Avg)	3-28.0	3-35.0
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-Yards	6-50	1-16
Possession Time	24:12	35:48
Third-Down Conversions	6 of 13	9 of 18
Fourth-Down Conversions	0 of 2	1 of 4
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	2-2	3-4
Sacks By: Number-Yards	0-0	3-20

RUSHING LEADERS: SDSU - Pierre Strong, Jr. 17-95; Isaiah Davis 2-6. UND - Otis Weah 17-88; Luke Skokna 10-73; Dalton Gee 4-10; Quincy Vaughn 3-5; Tommy Schuster 3-5. **PASSING LEADERS:** SDSU - Mark Gronowski 16-32-2 309. UND - Tommy Schuster 20-32-1 184; Cade Peterson 1-1-0 23; Jake Richter 0-1-0 0. **RECEIVING LEADERS:** SDSU - Jaxon Janke 7-161; Jadon Janke 5-109; Jordan Meachum 2-18; Mike Morgan 1-12; Skyler Cavanaugh 1-9. UND - Garrett Maag 5-87; Marcus Preston 4-31; Jake Richter 3-30; Luke Skokna 3-17; Bo Belquist 2-24; Derek Paulson 2-17. **INTERCEPTIONS:** SDSU - Preston Tetzlaff 1-0. UND - Jordan Canady 1-7; Ray Haas 1-0. **SACKS:** SDSU - none. UNI - Noah Larson 1.0-8; Jaxon Turner 1.0-7; Josh Navratil 1.0-5. **TACKLE LEADERS (UA-A-TOT):** SDSU - Logan Backhaus 5-6-11; Preston Tetzlaff 7-3-10; Don Gardner 5-1-6; Graham Spalding 3-1-4; Reece Winkelman 3-1-4. UND - Noah Larson 3-4-7; Caleb Nelson 3-3-6; Evan Holm 4-1-5; Josh Navratil 2-3-5.