



The MMCRU Insider

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launched a deep throw to a wide open Michael Schmilen who was quickly smothered by 5 Saints' defenders.

The second quarter started with the Royals in possession 3rd and 6 in striking territory. Harpenau reant it to the goal line, dove and scored another Royals touchdown. After Johnson's PAT the score went to 17-0.

The Royals' kickoff went to St. Ansgar's go-to ball carrier, Korben Michels. Michels found a hole and went all the way to give St. Ansgar reason to cheer.

Gage Johnson received the kickoff and ran it back to the 35. Small gains and a 2nd down conversion on a Harpenau put the Royals on the 50. A couple run plays went no where. A launched throw by Harpenau was intercepted Saints' Trey Johans, his 6th of the year. The Royals were flagged on second down for face-mask, advancing the Saints and additional 15 yards. St. Ansgar again converted for a new set of downs, taking the ball to the 42 for 2nd and 8. They were flagged for fals start and were moved back 5 yards, making it 2nd and 13. An incomplete pass put the Saints in a 3rd and 13 position. St. Ansgar took a time out at 4th and 8 at the Royals' 37. They punted after the time out.

A tough offensive series for the Royals came after the punt. Harpenau was sacked. A tackle for loss was complicated by flags. The call was an offensive holding which was declined by St. Ansgar. The Royals faced 3rd down and 17

yards from their own 36. A Harpenau pass to Bork at midfield gave the Royals a, 18-yard gain resetting the play to 1st and 10 and a Mulder carry gave the Royals another first down. The Royals got into a bit of trouble moving the ball in the right direction but a Camden Bork completion put the Royals into a 4th and 1 position mid-field. But a holding call took it back 10 yards to the Saints 47 for 4th and 11. The Royals turned it over on downs.

Several plays moved the ball very little out of midfield. At 42 seconds to go in the half the Saints were at 3rd and 11. A deep throw was nearly intercepted by Wyatt Alesch, but fell incomplete. The Saints turned the ball over on downs with 32 seconds in the half. Royals took over at their own 31. The Royals downed after the snap to run out the clock and head to the locker room with a 17-7 lead.

A tipped Royals pass was intercepted.

The Saints came out ready. Their first possession showed 2 first down conversions. They moved to 2nd and goal. And 3rd and goal. Then lost yards but were still inside the 10. With 4th and goal at the Royals' 15 brought up the Saints 1st field goal attempt all season. An encroachment flag against the Royals moved the ball from the 15 to the 10, shortening the effort, which was good. The Saints' score put it at 17-10. The Royals retained possession of the on-side kick.

John Schmilen got the call and moved the ball 11 yards. A big Gage Johnson run took the

ball into Saints territory. But the next pass was overthrown into the waiting arms of a defender. The Saints were threatening in Royals territory. A false start against the Saints took them the wrong way. A deep pass was interrupted by Alesch on a 4th down conversion attempt. Royals took over on downs.

Starting from their own 25 they converted on 2nd down. A nice Otoes-in' catch at the sidelines by Bork gave the Royals new downs at their own 36 with less than a minute in the quarter.

Another pass to Bork took the Royals into Saints' territory. It was Borks' 31st catch of the season and his 5th in the championship game. The Royals got a new set of downs after a Mulder run. Another Bork reception took the ball to the Saints' 22. Then it was Bork again to the 19 for a new set of downs. J Schmilen carried the ball to gain 5 on the ground. And another gain of 3 from J Schmilen with the clock ticking. Harpenau, from 3rd and 2 scampered and slid to the 6 putting the Royals at 1st and goal. Mulder tood the handoff and plunged into the endzone with 8:01 to go in the season. The Royals, showing an understanding of their opponent's ability, tried for a 2-point conversion. It failed. The Royals kicked to the Saints with a 23-10 score.

At 1st and 10 three Royals' defenders got deep marking a tackle for loss. The next play gave the ball back to the Royals. Gage John-

son was waiting for the Schwiesow pass. The Royals took another flag. This was for an illegal blindside block. It cost Blue 15 yards.

The Saints' defense stayed tough. The Royals punted the ball away from mid field. With 5-27 to go the Saints launched a pass to their reliable, but mostly quiet Connor Mullenbach who ran it for a score. The PAT was good. The closing minutes of this intense game saw a 23-17 game with 5:17 to go.

Harpenau took the snap at 3rd and 6. Under pressure and scrambling, Harpenau threw the ball up and into a crowd with both Royals and Saints. Brayson Mulder came down with it and ran to the Saints' 40. It was 1st and 10 with 3:50 to go.

From the Saints' 25 and 1st and 10 Mulder got the call and carried 3 defenders to gain 8 yards. The clock stayed ticking. The Royals moved the ball to the 15 to reset the downs. The Saints called a time out with 1:15 to go. At 2nd and 9, Mulder got the call. His line gave him a hole and he squeezed through going all the way to the house. Johnson put it through the uprights.

The Saints series met with incomplete passes. Royals took over possession on downs with 39 seconds to go. The Royals took a knee on 2nd and 10 and 33 second remaining. The Royals claim the 20-25-26 State title with a final score of 30-17.

Quarterback Eli Harpenau threw 14 of 21 passes for 169 yards, 3 interceptions and 10 carries for 44 yards and 1 touchdown throw.

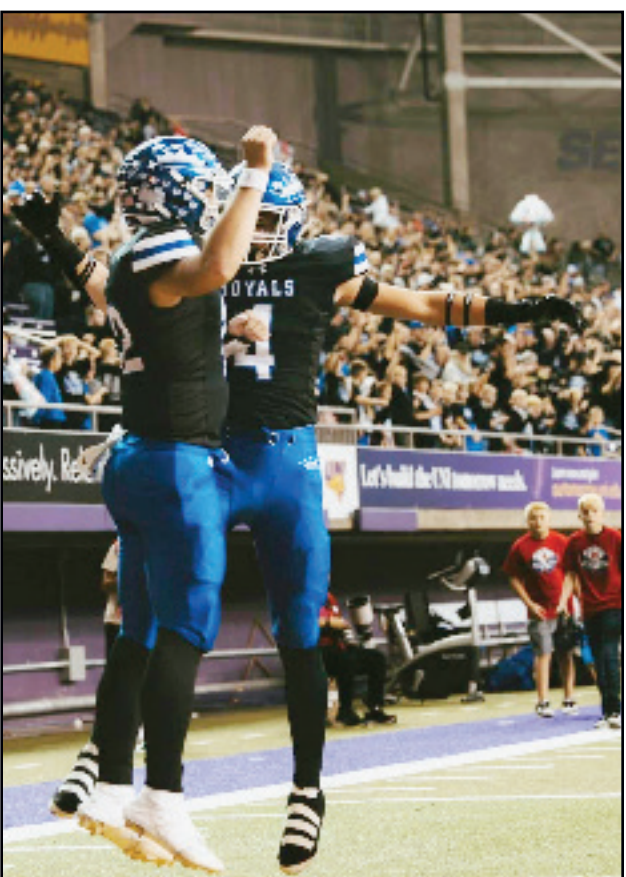
Brayson Mulder carried 19 times gianing 58 yards and 2 TDs. He grabbed two passes for 36 yards.

John Schmilen carried 41 times for 156 yards.

Gage Johnson caught 3 passes for 28 yards and an interception. Kaden Bork was on the receiving end of 7 passes for 65 yards.

Michael Schmilen grabbed 2 passes for 40 yards and a TD.

Leading Royal defenders were Brayson Mulder, 4 solo tackles 2.5 for loss, shared with Kaden Steffen. Wyatt Alesch and Brayden Dunn each had 3 solos and J Schmilen stopped 2 Saints.



Photos by Kora Alesch



**MMCRU Royals
Go! Fight! Win!**