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YOUR FERRIS STATE BULLDOGS ARE THE

2021 DIVISION II NATIONAL CHAMPIONS



NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP COVERAGE

Brody Keiser | Sports Editor | keiserb1@ferris.edu

Finished Business

Ferris State wins 2021 DII National Championship



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Players lift the National Championship trophy after their 58 - 17 victory.

Brandon Wirth Sports Reporter

Confetti. T-Shirts. Hats. Trophy.

What do these items have in common? Five words: "Ferris State Bulldogs" and "National Champions."

This goal was achieved following a loss in the national championship in 2018, leaving the Bulldogs to fly home from McKinney, Texas without a victory. Now, Ferris finally made the trip home with the extra passenger they have been waiting its entire history for: the National Championship trophy.

Thanks to one of the most dominating performances in D-II college football championship history, Ferris earned their first program title with a 58-17 win versus Valdosta State Saturday in McKinney.

"Finally getting it done for our staff and our players, it's just surreal," senior Dylan Pasquali said. "I can't thank every single person for this great opportunity at Ferris State University."

The ball began in the hands of the Valdosta State. On the first possession, the Blazers began looking in the air despite their number nation rushing ranking. Following an opening incomplection, Valdosta went to the ground for the next two plays. Although quarterback Ivory Durham ran for nine yards on second down, the Bulldog defense held strong and stuffed the third-down run forcing an eventually deflected punt to the Ferris 48-yard line.

The Bulldogs began with what got them to the national title game: a stout rushing attack. Almost identical to the first play of the semi-final game against Shepherd, Bernhardt's opening carry broke away for a 64-yard run. The only difference? Bernhardt found the endzone on the same play and gave the Bulldogs an immediate 6-0 advantage.

"Coach Annese mentioned we were going to run that first play before the game," Bernhardt said on the open-

ing touchdown run. "It was either going to be a run if the linebacker went out with Marcus (Taylor) or throw it if he stayed in. I ended up running it, bounced it out, and saw some daylight."

Valdosta State finally got going offensively after the opening drive with a big pass down the sideline to Brian Saunders. After a couple of big plays from Durham, the Blazers took a one-point lead on a TD pass to running back Seth McGill.

For Bernhardt, his seasoned lacrosse career included two big trips to the National title game. When it came to the bright light of McKinney ISD Stadium, the senior wasn't fazed. #12 scampered for his second huge gain of the day on a read-option keeper for 48 yards. Bernhardt would follow the offensive line's push and punch it in from five yards out one play later to regain a 13-7 advantage.

"We're fortunate to have incredible athletes on this team. The offensive line just performs how they're supposed to," Pasquali said. "We couldn't do anything without them as well as they couldn't do anything without us."

Ferris' defense began in zone coverage early on in the game. The second-team all-region honoree quarterback found his mark multiple times in a big way on the following possession. The first, a big first down catch by Saunders. The second, a touchdown to Travon Roberts to give the Blazers the lead back at 14-13 with 3:44 remaining in the quarter.

With the momentum in Valdosta's favor, the Bulldogs looked to silence the Valdosta fans on the ground. Unfortunately, an awkward tackle caused Bernhardt to fumble the ball and limp over to the medical tent. Despite the good field position in the red zone, Ferris State held strong and kept the Blazers to a field goal.

"It was huge," Murphy said on the crucial defensive stop. "I think throughout the whole playoffs when we got into a goal-line situation, we have done our best to get off the field."

With Bernhardt being evaluated on the sideline, it was Mylik Mitchell's turn under center. Despite the change in play-caller, the Bulldogs seemed to have been more motivated to keep the offensive success going. On the second play of the drive, junior Jeremy Burrell broke free on a read-option run to the right and stiff-armed a Blazer on his way to the endzone for a 78-yard touchdown. Barnett would make the extra point to take a 20-17 lead.

The Blazers would take to the air to try to stop the momentum swing. Facing a third down and long, Durham's pass was broken up by Alex Thomas and into the hands of Cyntell Williams for the Bulldogs first takeaway of the night.

Coach Annese elected to keep Mitchell in the game despite the sideline reports of Bernhardt being ready to return. After an early incomplection, a QB draw and scramble run set up a fourth and one. With time to talk after a Valdosta time-out, Annese decided to insert Bernhardt to pick up the first down on the ground. The Bulldogs began to use the jet sweep concept to pick up chunk yards and move the sticks. After moving to the two-yard line, it was Bernhardt who pushed his way through the pile and reach the endzone for the 23rd time of the year.

"He's so extraordinary," Annese said regarding Bernhardt's performance. "He's a special athlete and special young man. I'm really going to miss him."

With a 27-17 lead, the defense continued to apply pressure on the Valdosta QB. The Bulldogs began to force quick throws and scrambles from Durham. After a big tackle on 2nd and 10 from Liam Daly, an outside scramble led Durham out of bounds courtesy of pressure from first-team All American Caleb Murphy. Valdosta would punt into the endzone as the Ferris faithful erupted from the defense effort.

"Our defense was different than in 2018," Annese said. "They made it a lot easier. Give credit to Coach Hodges and the rest of the coaching staff for getting our defense



Ferris State
58

Valdosta State
17



going.”

The next drive began with a series of option pitches to C.J. Jefferson for big gains. The offense continued to pound on the 107th ranked rushing defense in the nation, using only four plays to reach Blazer territory. After an awkward fall from Bernhardt, senior Tyler Minor took over the drive and put the Bulldogs into the endzone for the fifth time. The nine-play, 80-yard drive gave Ferris a 34-17 advantage with 1:36 to go in the half.

Following a failed fake punt attempt, the Bulldogs got the ball back at mid-field.

Mitchell and the offense looked to extend the lead with just about a minute to go. After a near turnover on a fumble, Mitchell responded with a perfect pass in stride to Tyrese Hunt-Thompson on completion over the middle. Hunt-Thompson would outrun the defender to the endzone and give the Bulldogs a 41-17 lead at the half in front of their devoted fans.

“It’s like we got an extra man on the field,” Mitchell said on the Bulldog fans’ energy. “They show out every day, whether it’s sleet, snow, or rain. They would probably even be out there in a tornado. They’re amazing and I appreciate them so much.”

While many thought the unbelievable performance couldn’t continue, the second play out of the half resulted in a 73-yard run by Minor putting the Bulldogs within 12 yards of extending the score. Sadly, Ferris State was denied a fourth-down conversion and came out with zero points.

As mentioned many times by the team in prior contests, the Bulldogs always look to play complementary football on both sides. The defense looked to stop Valdosta on their first possession following the turnover. After a penalty gave Blazers a first down, the Bulldogs showed why their defense was considered underrated. On second and short, Olarere Oladipo crushed Durham on a sack and knocked the ball onto the Texas turf. Senior Sam Girodat would jump on the football and recover the fumble at the 20-yard line. The

Bulldogs would stall offensively, but a 32-yard field goal by Barnett pushed the lead to 27.

Following a third Valdosta punt, the offense had a chance to break an NCAA D-II football record for most points in a single postseason with a touchdown. On second down, Mitchell unleashed a huge pass down the sideline to Xavier Wade, who caught it and preceded to outrun the Blazer secondary down to the eight-yard line. Three plays later, it was quarterback Evan Cummins who plunged into the endzone and the record books.

“We are coached well,” Mitchell said regarding the change in quarterbacks. “We do what we got to during the week, we stick together, and we come out a play ball. That’s what we were born to do.”

With the Bulldogs leading 51-17, the only thing missing from the dominant performance was a defensive touchdown. The Bulldogs delivered on the preceding possession thanks to a “pick six” by Daly. The damage was done and the fans began to chant towards Valdosta to “warm up the buses.”

“Coaches put me in a great position,” Daly said on the interception. “Sam flushed him out of the pocket, he threw it to me, and I finished it from there.”

From there, both teams began to funnel in their seniors and bench players as the fourth quarter began. Valdosta would run out of downs twice in their lone possessions, while Ferris would fumble and eventually run the clock out on a nine-minute final drive.

As the clock hit zero, the pandemonium began. Players, coaches, and fans began to funnel onto the field to celebrate the program’s first National Championship on the center logo. The trophy found its way to the stage, where head coach Annese raised his first collegiate title as the confetti fell from above.

When asked about the feeling, Coach Annese immediately addressed the program’s culture.

“Our culture is authentic. It’s real. We love each other. You coach to win championships for them, not for you. Just

seeing the happiness on their face is awesome.”

Ferris State proved their number six overall rushing rank correct with a whopping rushing 463 yards on the big stage. Bernhardt led the way with 148 yards and three touchdowns on 14 carries. Minor added 125 yards on eight carries and Burrell contributed 103 yards on four carries. Minor, Burrell, and Cummins each had a rushing score. Mitchell commanded the Bulldog passing attack going three of six for 122 yards and one touchdown. Hunt-Thompson finished with the lone TD reception for 47 yards. Xavier Wade added a 72-yard reception and C.J. Jefferson added 29 yards on four touches.

“Looking at our offensive line, we knew we could get at them (running the ball),” Bernhardt said on the run-heavy game flow. “But I always had my mindset ready to throw it.”

Although Valdosta State came into the game with the fifth-best rushing offense in the country, they were held in check by the Bulldogs, logging only 110 yards rushing and 268 yards total in the contest. Daly led the Bulldogs with 13 total tackles, followed by Murphy and Williams with seven. Oladipo and Murphy each contributed one tackle for loss and a sack in the contest. Oladipo forced the only Blazer fumble while Williams and Daly each added an interception.

“After the first quarter, we came together and had a short memory,” Daly said on the defense’s performance. “We played great from there on out.”

The Bulldogs mission is complete. After a tough 49-47 loss to the Blazers in 2018, Ferris State got their revenge in dominating fashion. For Coach Annese, getting those players a title from the ’18 team made the moment even more special.

“We had the guys talk about their ‘why’ today and I picked the 18 that were here in ’18. It was life-altering to even be a part of the National Championship. Now that we won it, it’s even better.”

For more stats, national championship gear, and more, visit www.ferrisstatebulldogs.com.

National Championship Statistics

FERRIS STATE

SCORE	58
TOTAL YARDS GAINED	581
PASSING YARDS	122
RUSHING YARDS	459
TURNOVERS FORCED	3
PENALTIES	7-67 YARDS
TIME OF POSSESSION	31:08

VALDOSTA STATE

SCORE	17
TOTAL YARDS GAINED	268
PASSING YARDS	158
RUSHING YARDS	110
TURNOVERS FORCED	2
PENALTIES	6-50 YARDS
TIME OF POSSESSION	28:52

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Three Headed Monster

The trio under center for Ferris State that helped secure the first national championship in program history.

Joe Nagy
Sports Reporter

When completing a perfect season, everything has to go right for a program. They must have elite players, coaches and even a bit of luck. It would seem that an injury to a key player like the team's starting quarterback can derail the best of seasons.

For the Bulldogs, this wasn't the case as they were able to successfully utilize three different quarterbacks to complete the national championship run.

It's not every day that QB room can have three top talent quarterbacks who can lead the team when needed. However, Tony Annese and the Bulldog fan base are blessed with the likes of Jared Bernhardt, Mylik Mitchell, and Evan Cummins. Although the three were fighting for the starting job all year, they've never put themselves before the well-being of the team.

College football programs would kill to have a quarterback who is a Harlon Hill finalist, a quarterback who can throw for 508 yards in a game or a quarterback that can score at will both on the ground and through the air. Ferris State had that in three different players.

Although fans have seen it all year, the three guys showed their unselfishness these past two games, where each player scored a touchdown in both the national semifinal and championship game. A feat of athleticism that will be hard to beat by other teams in the nation.

Bernhardt finished the postseason with 10 touchdowns in total, 8 on the ground and 2 in the air. Mylik Mitchell had 8 trips to the endzone that were evenly split down the middle, 4 rushing and 4 passing. Evan Cummins was close behind them with 6 rushing touchdowns, keeping his reputation as the goal-line specialist.

JARED BERNHARDT

When you think of 2021 Ferris football, the first athlete you think of is Jared Bernhardt.

Bernhardt, a fifth-year senior transfer from Maryland, decided to turn away from a chance to play in the Premier Lacrosse League to honor his late father, Jim Bernhardt. And after losing a heart breaker to the University of Virginia in the 2021 National Championship game, Bernhardt was looking for redemption.

"I told coach I wanted to come to a team that was going to compete. I wanted to win a championship whether I played or didn't play. I just wanted to help out," Bernhardt said. "I told coach I just want to go win a championship."

With experience on the big stage, Bernhardt looked to find his role among his QB counterparts. Even though he was the primary starter throughout the year, he knew that if he went down the offense would be in good hands with Mylik, Evan, and Coach Annese. Something that ended up coming to fruition early in the season when Bernhardt missed three games in the regular season and another in the playoffs.

"We're just trying to listen to coach, so he has confidence in all of us, you know, You guys have seen that throughout the year," Bernhardt said after the semi-final win over Shepherd. "Last week with Mylik and Evan getting a touchdown there, and I think it's just really special."

Bernhardt was special from the very first game, scoring seven touchdowns in his first collegiate football game against Findlay.

Jared finished the season with 34 touchdowns. With 23 of those on the ground and 11 in the air, Bernhardt added an incredible offensive threat to opposing defenses. Bernhardt would rush for 1,421 yards in only ten games played, averaging 142 yards per game on the ground. With a 182.4 passing efficiency completing 87 passes on 123 attempts, his versatility is one of the many reasons the Bulldogs were able to hoist the championship trophy this past weekend.

MYLIK MITCHELL

Mitchell is another Division 1 transfer, however, he has stayed on the gridiron for the whole of his collegiate career. After a strong start to his redshirt freshman season at Kent State, where he had thrown for five touchdowns to one interception in four games, a broken hand cut his season short. After the healing process, Mitchell was hit with more adversity, tearing his right ACL before his sophomore season.

Due to his injuries, Mitchell opened his commitment and found himself in the crimson and gold. His struggles with injuries would follow him. Right before the 2020 spring game, he tore his left ACL, and with the COVID-19 pandemic halting the world, it became a blessing in disguise to give him more time to heal.

Mylik was all smiles after raising the trophy last weekend, especially seeing all his hard work come to fruition.

"Man to my family, to me, to everybody who helped get me here man, I can't explain it. I really can't explain it right now," Mitchell said. "From where I came from to where a lot of these people on this team came from just seeing everybody come together and do their thing it's amazing man."

Mitchell's favoring of his arm helped open the possibilities of the offensive schemes. Countless times on the season, he made pinpoint throws from distance, proving that he is still a D1 talent. He proved his arm talent against Northwood, where he broke the single-game school passing record with 506 passing touchdowns to go along with 6 passing touchdowns. However, he credits his improvements and abilities to the guys around him.

Mitchell laughed after the national championship when asked about the depth in the QB room.

"QBU, QBU man. Jared, Evan, Jesse, I mean we got 10 quarterbacks and they all work. Even on scout team them guys work hard. Each and every one of us we're coached well."

Mylik finished the season with 1,199 passing yards. Completing 81 out of 124



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Jared Bernhardt runs into the endzone on the opening offensive drive for the Bulldogs in the National Championship.



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Mylik Mitchell walks on the field at the National Championship game.



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Evan Cummins lines up at the goal line shortly before scoring a rushing touchdown against Valdosta State.

passes, tallying a 65.3% completion rate and 172.6 in efficiency. With 11 touchdowns in the air for the southpaw, he was able to keep the defenses guessing with his scrambling ability, adding 3 TDs with 187 yards on 61 attempts.

EVAN CUMMINS

Although Cummins eased into a different role than he was expecting this year, his talent and experience allowed him to come into the game and make a difference when needed. Being one of the handfuls of players that made it to the last dance in 2018, he helped keep the focus to hoist the trophy when it was all said and done last weekend.

Cummins shares the versatility of being both a runner and thrower like his counterparts in Mitchell and Bernhardt. Although he has seen the field less than the other two, he's adopted the next-man-up mentality.

In a quote from the Big Rapids Pioneer, Cummins talked about the depth of talent that graces the QB room at Ferris State.

"We have so many weapons it's kind of crazy," Cummins said. "We are supportive of each other because we have unreal depth and we can pretty much throw it to anybody and they're playmakers out there."

The 6'3" 225-pound quarterback's number was called, he was a force near the goal line this season. Notching 5 rushing touchdowns and 7 passing touchdowns in the regular season. Cummins made the most of his opportunities when Bernhardt went down with a knee injury during the 3rd game. Starting for the Bulldogs against Saginaw Valley State, Cummins threw for three touchdowns and ran for another three touchdowns in a 47 - 45 shootout with the Cardinals.

Cummins completed the season just shy of 600 all-purpose yards. Completing 38 of his 51 passes with 407 yards, he achieved 53.4% completion and 148.8 efficiency. On the ground, he gained 162 total yards on 54 carries. Cummins finished 3rd on the team in rushing touchdowns with nine on the year.

During the post-game press conference following the National Championship game, Coach Annese made sure to praise his quarterbacks.

"I feel blessed to have [Bernhardt] on our team like that," Annese said. "But I will add that Mylik Mitchell and Evan Cummins, those three guys were so unselfish this year. It's just incredible."

Jared, Mylik, and Evan have embodied the next-man-up mentality. Challenging themselves and each other during practice, while being able to build relationships that will last longer than their time on the gridiron. This mentality helped bring the Bulldogs their first ever football national title.

It is unclear who will be the teams starting quarterback next season as Bernhardt is a senior. With the caliber of quarterback play seen this season, it may not matter.

2021 FERRIS QUARTERBACK STAT COMPARISON

PASSING STATISTICS

NAME	YARDS	TOUCHDOWNS	INTERCEPTIONS	COMPLETION %
JARED BERNHARDT	1322 YDS	11 TD	5 INT	70.7%
MYLIK MITCHELL	1321 YDS	11 TD	2 INT	64.6%
EVAN CUMMINS	407 YDS	7 TD	1 INT	52.5%

RUSHING STATISTICS

NAME	YARDS	TOUCHDOWNS	ATTEMPTS	AVERAGE PER ATTEMPT
JARED BERNHARDT	1421 YDS	26 TD	159	8.9 YDS
MYLIK MITCHELL	188 YDS	3 TD	66	2.8 YDS
EVAN CUMMINS	179 YDS	9 TD	60	3



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Continuing his Ferris Legacy

Former Bulldog quarterback Travis Russell helps finish what he started, but this time not in uniform.

Joe Nagy
Sports Reporter

After finishing a near 2-decade career of being on the football field, former quarterback Travis Russell left his job after college to return to the gridiron.

Falling short in both 2018 and 2019 of the national title, Russell thought that his college football career would conclude after the heartbreaking loss to West Florida in the semi-final game. Instead, that following the new year, he'd be putting his marketing and finance degree to use.

Russell was able to do something that some may say is harder than winning a national championship. That was securing a well-paying job in his hometown right after college.

"When I played my last game in December of 2019, that first Monday of the new year in 2020, I started. I worked for a brokerage firm called AON," Russell said. "To be honest, I had a great experience."

However, there was always a desire to take the next step in his football career. He started slow with helping out the football program at Grand Rapids Union High School but being around the sport again rekindled a fire to help young men through football.

"I wanted to dedicate my life to helping young men through a game that I love. So, after a year and a half, I decided to walk away, and after a year and a half, it was the best decision that I ever made." Russell said.

2021 was the first year Russell joined the coaching staff, officially being an assistant and slot receivers coach. Making the jump to a full-time college coaching job from part-time at a high school brings many challenges both on and off the field.

Being in between jobs, the last thing that Russell wanted to worry about was finding a place to stay. About to bite the bullet on having to commute two hours out of the day from Grand Rapids, he got a special offer from head coach Tony Annese to stay at his house for the duration of the season.

"So coach being the world-class person that he is, said, 'hey, I have an extra room, and it's just my wife and me, so you can stay with us.' So he let me stay with him during the season, so it allowed me to dedicate a lot more time to our team and football," Russell said.

Being around Annese for more than just football practice gave him many invaluable lessons as a young coach. Who better to learn how to coach at the college level than the reigning Division 2 coach of the year.

Getting players to buy into a program is always tough, even for a national championship-caliber team. Especially with the off-season just getting underway, Russell's focus lately has been fully on recruiting. And with the Bulldogs pulling in the top-ranked recruiting class for D2, there's a lot to expect for this off-season's recruits.

But with the team's newfound reputation, convincing players to come to Big Rapids may have gotten easier, but maintaining the winning culture is Russell's number one focus.

"You need to find a coach and a program that can simultaneously push you and challenge you and hold you to a really high standard and demand lofty expectations, but at the same time believe in you and help you and push you to get there," Russell said.

With a team that is heavy in veterans, it takes a lot of stress off of the coaches' plates when they can rely on the culture and leaders of the team to keep everyone on focus.

"I think our players and the cultures we have there is the best possible recruiting field we can possibly have," Russell said. "It recruits itself in a way."

Not to mention the stages that the Bulldogs play year after year, more specifically, the Anchor-Bone classic. Russell



Photo by: Angele Cane | Courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Travis Russell sending in signals to the Bulldogs offense. This was Russell first year as an assistant coach/slot receiver coach.

had played in a handful of games against the Lakers, but when the team traveled to Lubber's in late 2021, it took the cake for him and the players.

With an attendance of 17,009, it was quite honestly the biggest crowd that most of the players would ever play against. And for Coach Russell, to see his guys dig deep and make plays when they needed it most, it was special to get a win against such a good rival.

"I knew that at some point against Grand Valley, whether it was another game there in the playoffs, at some point, we were going to be tested. I knew our guys were going to respond well, and they sure did that night," Russell said.

For the young coach, preparing for these big games hasn't changed. Although he doesn't have as much pressure on the field as he did as a player, Russell still shows the same demeanor as he did when he'd take the helm of the Bulldogs.

"There's a lot of similarities in that as a coach. No matter what happens, turnover or touchdown, let's make sure that we're on the same page, we're calm, and we're focused on the next drive, the next series, the next match-up," Russell said. "So I would say although it is very different, that is one of the similarities that making sure you stay calm and level-headed, no matter the situation you stay level-headed all the time."

However, when he was a player, he can recall when he wanted to get the boys as fired up as he was. Many people can recall when they saw the Bulldogs take on Michigan Tech in 2019, there was a blizzard and freezing temperatures. Regardless of the conditions, Russell still strolled out to warm-ups without a shirt.

We might not see that again as the NCAA has since enforced a rule that all players must be wearing an article of clothing where their number is visible.

"Whether that had anything to do with me that day, I don't know, but our team was lighting it up that day," Russell said.

It's still up for debate whether Russell had a part to play in the NCAA's decision. Still, the Bulldog faithful will always refer to as the Travis Russell rule.

Russell and the other coaches have bought into the process to make the team's national championship an expectation rather than one of accomplishment. A process that will take three parts to cultivate success in every facet of the program.

"There are three things that come to mind. Number one is developing the players that we have on campus. Continue to push them, help them grow, help them work on things they need to work on," Russell said.

A time-tested process that can help continue the success that the team has been experiencing through the last handful of years.

"Number two, strengthen our relationships with them. Become closer with them, do everything we can to understand them, and put ourselves in a position to better serve them and better help them so that they can have a better experience," Russell commented.

Developing and maintaining those relationships with the players is something that all coaches can attest to. Growing a bond that surpasses the football field and something that can last a lifetime.

"Number three, continue to recruit the very best players and bring them in so that we continue that experienced success, and we're able to develop players that know how to win and that want to do it. So those three things I think are the primary focus for the coaches right now to do what we want to do, and that's win at a very high level," Russell said.

With just one year under his belt and the number of connections he has at his fingertips, Coach Russell's future seems to be promising, whether at Ferris or somewhere else.

WHERE THE BULLDOGS RANK AMONG PAST CHAMPIONS OF THE LAST 10 SEASONS

AVERAGE YARDS PER GAME

1. 2018 VALDOSTA STATE: 523 YPG
2. 2021 FERRIS STATE: 512 YPG
3. 2013 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 473 YPG
4. 2016 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 471 YPG
5. 2012 VALDOSTA STATE: 469 YPG
6. 2011 PITTSBURGH STATE: 448 YPG
7. 2017 TEXAS A&M COMMERCE: 447 YPG
8. 2015 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 440 YPG
9. 2014 CSU-PUEBLO: 419 YPG
10. 2019 WEST FLORIDA: 412 YPG

AVERAGE YARDS ALLOWED PER GAME

1. 2015 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 224 YPG
2. 2016 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 240.9 YPG
3. 2021 FERRIS STATE: 275.6 YPG
4. 2014 CSU-PUEBLO: 293.9 YPG
5. 2013 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 299.6 YPG
6. 2017 TEXAS A&M COMMERCE: 303.4 YPG
7. 2011 PITTSBURGH STATE: 308.9 YPG
8. 2018 VALDOSTA STATE: 343.7 YPG
9. 2012 VALDOSTA STATE: 353.8 YPG
10. 2019 WEST FLORIDA: 355.3 YPG

AVERAGE POINTS PER GAME

1. 2018 VALDOSTA STATE: 52 PPG
2. 2021 FERRIS STATE: 47.2 PPG
3. 2016 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 45.47 PPG
4. 2013 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 44.67 PPG
5. 2012 VALDOSTA STATE: 41.57 PPG
6. 2013 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 41.4 PPG
7. 2011 PITTSBURGH STATE: 40.2 PPG
8. 2017 TEXAS A&M COMMERCE: 37.13 PPG
9. 2014 CSU-PUEBLO: 37 PPG
10. 2019 WEST FLORIDA: 36.53 PPG

AVERAGE POINTS ALLOWED PER GAME

1. 2016 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 12 PPG
2. 2015 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 12.33 PPG
3. 2014 CSU-PUEBLO: 14.23 PPG
4. 2017 TEXAS A&M COMMERCE: 16.73 PPG
5. 2013 NORTHWEST MISSOURI STATE: 17.87 PPG
6. 2021 FERRIS STATE: 18.3 PPG
7. 2019 WEST FLORIDA: 19.67 PPG
8. 2012 VALDOSTA STATE: 20 PPG
9. 2011 PITTSBURGH STATE: 20.1 PPG
10. 2018 VALDOSTA STATE: 22.57 PPG

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Become a **Guest student at Mid!** Save BIG on a transfer-friendly course or two at **Mid Michigan College** while attending your "home" university or college. Guest students at Mid typically register for general education courses like ENG222, MAT212, or PSY101, and others, all of which easily transfer, and are often available on-campus or online. There is **still time to register** for the upcoming Winter Semester.

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Award Winning Bulldogs



Tony Annese

NCAA DII Coach of the Year



Ryan Hodges

NCAA DII Defensive Coordinator of the Year



Dylan Pasquali

Gene Upshaw Award DII Lineman of the Year
DII Elite 100 All-America First Team



Caleb Murphy

DII Elite 100 All-America Second Team



Jared Bernhardt

DII Elite 100 All-America Team



Jake Boonstra

DII Elite 100 All-America Team



Zein Obeid

DII Elite 100 All-America Second Team

PHOTOS FROM THE GAME



Photo by Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

(Left to right) Liam Daly, Alex Thomas and Major Dedmond celebrate Daly's interception.



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyle Editor

Tyler Minor scores from one yard out to put the Bulldogs up 34 - 17.



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Jeremy Burrell celebrates his 78 yard touchdown run.



NOW OPEN!

Monday-Thursday, 11am-3pm | IRC Building | 1301 S. State Street



PHOTOS FROM THE GAME



Photo by Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Xavier Wade (left) and Derrick Corbin (right) talk on the sideline.



Photo by Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Liam Daly led the Bulldogs with 13 tackles in their championship victory.



Photo by Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Senior Sam Girodat celebrates a fumble recovery in the 3rd quarter.



Photo by Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

(Left to right) Adam Sieler, Mason Pline, Zein Obeid and Caleb Wisniski root on their team from the sidelines.



Photo by Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Senior defensive back Alex Thomas defends a deep pass.



Photo by Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Thousands of Bulldog fans cheer on the team as the team rolled to the championship.

PHOTOS FROM THE GAME



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Freshman kicker Jermaine Roemer kicks off in the 1st quarter



Photo by: Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor

Alex Thomas, Nick Matiere-Bey, and Konnor Near pump each other up in the 1st quarter.

Back to School

Pj Skate

Sponsored by Ferris Dining & Housing

When:

January 13th

9PM-11PM

Where:

Ewigleben Ice Arena

What:

The first open skate
of the year!

Why:

- Giveaways
- Raffles
- Popcorn
- Ice Cream
- It's FREE!

MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

LANSING - Gov. Whitmer's office announced Monday that she would again be holding the annual State of the State speech virtually this year. The Governor and House Speaker Wentworth announced the continuation of the virtual event amid another spike in COVID-19 cases in Michigan.

"The State of the State address is a tradition rooted in history. It is an opportunity for Michiganders to hear about the work of state government and see Republicans and Democrats come together to focus on the issues that will put Michigan families, communities and small businesses first," Whitmer and Wentworth said in a joint statement according to the Detroit Free Press.

"This year, we've agreed that the State

of the State address should once again be held remotely to ensure everyone can safely partake in this time-honored event."

Despite easy access to vaccines and boosters, Michigan death trends are approaching the worst thus far in the pandemic and currently ranks seventh among other states in deaths from COVID-19 per capita over the last 7 days at time of reporting according to the CDC.

This comes just days after the Governor's husband, Marc Mallory tested positive for COVID-19. Whitmer tested negative on a rapid test that day and again tested negative on a PCR test the following day.

The announcement did not include information on the time the speech will be delivered.

GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

U. S. - A US man has become the first person on earth to receive a heart transplant by way of genetically modified pig.

The seven hour surgery took place last Friday in Baltimore and recipient David Bennett is reportedly doing well according to BBC World.

This transplant was deemed the last hope in saving Bennett's life. It is not yet clear what the longterm outcome of this procedure is.

"It was either die or do this transplant," Bennett, 57, said, a day before the surgery.

"I know it's a shot in the dark, but it's my last choice."

Doctors at the University of Maryland Medical Center were granted special use privilege by the FDA on the basis that Bennett would otherwise die.

Surgeon Bartley P. Griffith said the

surgery would bring the world "one step closer to solving the organ shortage crisis", the University of Maryland School of Medicine said in a release.

According to OrganDonor.gov, more than 100,000 people on the donor waiting list.

This is not the first time an animal to human organ transplant has been performed, either. Surgeons in New York reported they had successfully transplanted a pig's kidney into a human, although that recipient was officially braindead.

Bennett is hoping his transplant will allow him to go on with his life.

"I look forward to getting out of bed after I recover," he said last Thursday.



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fsutorch.com/letter-to-the-editor/

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To advertise with the Torch, contact Julie Wiersma at the Pioneer Group: (231) 592-8373 or Julie.Wiersma@hearst.com

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