

WEEK ONE
 JAMES MADISON AT NC STATE

RALEIGH, N.C. -- Jakobi Meyers has offered North Carolina State quarterback Ryan Finley a simple suggestion when it comes to throwing his way.

"He says just put it in his area code," Finley said.

He spent nearly all of Saturday's season opener backing it up, too. The wideout had career highs of 14 catches for 161 yards, including two big third-down grabs on the clinching late drive that helped the Wolfpack hold off James Madison 24-13.

Meyers' 161 yards receiving are the most for a Wolfpack player in a season-opening game, and he did it despite being hobbled with a sprained left ankle that had him showing up for postgame interviews wearing a protective boot. The Wolfpack needed all of it with fellow starting receiver Stephen Louis out with an injury.

The 6-foot-2 redshirt junior had flashed in big plays before, but this was a start-to-finish -- and frequently dominant -- showing unlike any before in his career.

Meyers figures his experience as a converted quarterback helps him in knowing what Finley needs from the pocket.

"I know you have guys that are two times bigger than you bearing down on you," Meyers said. "So I know I've got get my eyes around and make a tough catch. If he can stand in there and take that hit, I can stand in there and make that catch."

Reggie Gallaspy II added a 6-yard touchdown run with 65 seconds left to seal this one for the Wolfpack (1-0), who came up with an inside-the-5 stop to force James Madison to take a field goal instead of going for the tying TD with about 7 minutes left.

Pittsburgh transfer Ben DiNucci started at QB and threw for 197 yards with a score for the tested Dukes (0-1), who were 28-2 over the past two seasons while winning the 2016 Championship Subdivision title and reaching last year's title game.

"I'm happy with their effort and the amount of heart they played with," James Madison coach Mike Houston said. "I'm just not happy with the critical mistakes."

THE TAKEAWAY

James Madison: The Dukes proved why they're the No. 2-ranked team in the Championship Subdivision polls, staying right with the Bowl Subdivision program from the Atlantic Coast Conference. They played without top cornerback Rashad Robinson, with the preseason Colonial Athletic Association defensive player of the year being ruled out for the season earlier Saturday due to a preseason foot injury. The Dukes were also without preseason all-conference defensive lineman Darrious Carter, who was out with a suspension for an undisclosed reason.

NC State: The entire preseason has been about finding out how well the Wolfpack developed experienced players to replace a crop of NFL draft picks from a nine-win season. Things were bumpy Saturday; an offense led by an NFL QB prospect in Finley and several big returning receivers had trouble sustaining drives and managed a meager 83 yards rushing. But the Wolfpack stayed a step ahead and avoided a momentum-sapping upset for the program.

MEYERS' FINAL DRIVE

Gallaspy's late TD came after Meyers came up with two huge catches, each on third-and-long. On the first, Meyers got wide open on the left side for a 39-yard catch -- which he said was the result of a week of preparation and offensive coordinator Eli Drinkwitz's gameplan.

"We knew if they press, I'd sell it and then I'd take off," Meyers said. "It was just perfectly drawn up. We just executed it."

He followed that with a tough 10-yard catch despite getting sandwiched by two defenders, setting up Gallaspy's score two plays later.

SCARY MOMENT

Wolfpack defensive lineman Eurndraus Bryant had to be carted off the field and taken to a nearby hospital for precautionary X-rays after he was hurt during a first-half pile up. Bryant didn't get up afterward, with Doeren saying Bryant told medical staffers that his "neck locked up" while he was down.

Bryant gave a thumbs-up while being carted off. The school said the X-rays were negative for a fracture and the team's Twitter account noted Bryant returned to the sideline by the end of the game.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
JMU	7	0	3	3	13
NCST	0	17	0	7	24

Scoring Summary -----

	JMU	NCST
FIRST QUARTER		
TD 3:41		
Riley Stapleton 5 Yd pass from Ben DiNucci (Ethan Ratke Kick)	7	0
8 plays, 68 yards, 2:58		
SECOND QUARTER		
FG 14:11		
Christopher Dunn 25 Yd Field Goal		3
11 plays, 69 yards, 4:25	7	
TD 9:39		
Thayer Thomas 16 Yd pass from Ryan Finley (Christopher Dunn Kick)	7	10
5 plays, 38 yards, 1:29		
TD 0:18		
C.J. Riley 14 Yd pass from Ryan Finley (Christopher Dunn Kick)	7	17
12 plays, 90 yards, 2:50		
THIRD QUARTER		
FG 10:19		
Ethan Ratke 19 Yd Field Goal		17
7 plays, 39 yards, 3:32	10	
FOURTH QUARTER		
FG 6:59		
Ethan Ratke 19 Yd Field Goal		17
15 plays, 74 yards, 7:12	13	17
TD 1:05		
Reggie Gallaspy II 6 Yd Run (Christopher Dunn Kick)		24
11 plays, 84 yards, 5:50	13	

TEAM STATS	JMU	NCST
First Downs	23	25
Total Yards	365	392
Total Plays	68	72
Avg Gain Per Play	5.4	5.4
Net Yards Rushing	163	83
Rushes	38	29
Yards Per Rush	4.3	2.9
Net Yards Passing	202	309
Comp-Att	24-30	29-43
Yards Per Pass	6.7	7.2
Times Sacked	1	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	4	7
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	0	1
Punt Average	0	40.0
Penalties	5	5
Penalty Yards	25	50
Fumbles	1	2
Fumbles Lost	1	1

Individual Stats

RUSHING

JMU	RUSH	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
Ben DiNucci	14	79	5.6	0	24
Marcus Marshall	12	65	5.4	0	26
Trai Sharp	5	10	2.0	0	5
Cardon Johnson	6	7	1.2	0	4
Jawon Hamilton	1	2	2.0	0	2
NCST	RUSH	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
Reggie Gallaspy II	17	68	4.0	1	14
Ryan Finley	3	6	2.0	0	9
Ricky Person Jr.	6	5	0.8	0	2
Jakobi Meyers	1	3	3.0	0	3
Trent Pennix	2	1	0.5	0	1

PASSING

JMU	COMP	ATT	YDS	Y/A	TD	INT	QBRAT
Ben DiNucci	23	27	197	7.3	1	0	--
Cole Johnson	1	2	5	2.5	0	0	--
Team	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--
NCST	COMP	ATT	YDS	Y/A	TD	INT	QBRAT
Ryan Finley	29	43	309	7.2	2	0	90.6

RECEIVING

JMU	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
Riley Stapleton	9	88	9.8	1	26
Josh Sims	4	32	8.0	0	13
David Eldridge	3	25	8.3	0	13
Mack Cullen	2	15	7.5	0	8
Kyndel Dean	2	15	7.5	0	13
Marcus Marshall	1	12	12.0	0	12
Clayton Cheatham	1	10	10.0	0	10
EJ Morgan	1	5	5.0	0	5
Trai Sharp	1	0	0.0	0	0
NCST	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG
Jakobi Meyers	14	161	11.5	0	39
Emeka Emezie	5	60	12.0	0	22
C.J. Riley	4	45	11.3	1	14
Kelvin Harmon	4	33	8.3	0	13
Thayer Thomas	1	16	16.0	1	16
Tyler Baker-Williams	1	-6	-6.0	0	0