

WEEK TWELVE
VMI at ARMY

Army closes home slate with 47-6 win over VMI

WEST POINT, N.Y. -- Still feeling the effects of a season-long struggle against injuries, Army quarterback Kelvin Hopkins Jr. didn't start the final home game of his career at Michie Stadium. The senior star sure finished it with a flourish.

Pressed into action when sophomore starter Jabari Laws was injured early, Hopkins responded by rushing for a career-high 208 yards and a touchdown on just 16 carries as Army's triple option overwhelmed VMI 47-6 on Saturday.

"I felt good, just taking it day-by-day. That's kind of been my mind-set," said Hopkins, who scored on a 63-yard run late in the third. "Just getting moving and taking some shots again felt really good. If you would have asked me this morning how today was going to go for me, I probably wouldn't have said (great)."

Senior Connor Slomka scored three times on short runs and classmate Kell Walker added a touchdown on a 59-yard scamper off a pretty pitch to the outside from Hopkins midway through the third quarter as Army (5-6) won its second straight after snapping a four-game losing streak last week against UMass. It was Army's second win this season over a team from the Championship Subdivision.

"Overall, a good day," said Army coach Jeff Monken, who notched his 40th win at the academy to tie Tom Cahill for fourth all-time at West Point. "We're excited. Just proud of the effort of everybody."

VMI (4-7) was coming off a 60-21 loss to No. 9 Furman, failing to score in the second half. The Keydets were blanked again after intermission as Army outscored VMI 19-0 in the third to take control. The Black Knights finished with 594 yards rushing on Senior Day, 37 yards shy of matching the school record set against Colgate of the FCS in 1989.

"We've got good momentum," Army senior linebacker Cole Christiansen said. "These last two games have been a step in the right direction."

The Keydets stayed close until Walker's score, which capped a 10-play drive that started at the Army 1.

Slomka's second touchdown came after a fourth-down gamble by VMI failed on the ensuing possession.

Laws made his third straight start at quarterback and staked the Black Knights to a 7-3 lead midway through the first quarter, ripping off a 27-yard run around the left side to set up his 4-yard scoring run. But the sophomore, who has emerged as the likely successor to Hopkins, was injured in the closing seconds of the first quarter as he tried to make a cut on a keeper deep in VMI territory.

Laws was carried off the field by two coaches, his day done after gaining 97 yards on nine carries.

After Grant Clemons kicked a 37-yard field goal midway through the second quarter to move the Keydets within 7-6, Hopkins gave the Black Knights a needed jolt just before halftime, taking a keeper right for 42 yards to set up Slomka's 3-yard scoring run for a 14-6 lead with 3:08 left in the second.

"We were a step slow playing the option, and when you've got a guy you don't have anybody else there to back him up," VMI coach Scott Wachenheim said. "I thought Army executed well all day. They wore us down as the game wore on."

VMI has a potent 1-2 punch in junior quarterback Reece Udinski -- he entered the game with 2,844 yards passing for 17 TDs with just three interceptions -- and tailback Alex Ramsey, who was averaging 121 yards rushing and led the FCS with 22 TDs and 134 points. But Ramsey, who had posted four straight 100-yard games to bring his season yardage total to 1,210, second nationally, finished with just 50 yards rushing on 14 carries, while Udinski was 22 of 34 for 218 yards passing.

TRICKERY WORKS

VMI began the game with a successful onside kick by Clemons. Defensive back DJ Dennis recovered near midfield for the Keydets, and Clemons gave them an early lead with a 47-yard field goal.

"After halftime, it was really anybody's ballgame," Clemons said. "They made some adjustments and we didn't."

THE TAKEAWAY

VMI: The Keydets have just one game left, so reaching .500 is not possible, but four wins is something to build on. In the two previous seasons, VMI had one win in 21 games, and with Ramsey and Udinski returning next season the Keydets will have a strong offensive core for Wachenheim.

"I think we have some really good players, some good young players," Wachenheim said. "I think we're on the right track. It's difficult to put wins together against FBS opponents. I'm proud of where we're going. We've moved the program in the right direction."

Army: The Black Knights have rebounded nicely against two lesser teams and need to beat both Hawaii and Navy to play to qualify for the postseason. If Laws can't go, Hopkins appears up for the task and third-stringer Christian Anderson got more work on Saturday.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
VMI	3	3	0	0	6
ARMY	7	7	19	14	47

Scoring Summary -----

	VMI	ARMY
FIRST QUARTER		
VMI FG 11:44 Grant Clemons 47 Yd Field Goal		
8 plays, 22 yards, 3:16	3	0
ARMY TD 7:17 Jabari Laws 4 Yd Run (Cole Talley Kick)		7
9 plays, 75 yards, 4:27	3	7
SECOND QUARTER		
VMI FG 6:34 Grant Clemons 37 Yd Field Goal		
16 plays, 99 yards, 5:57	6	7
ARMY TD 3:08 Connor Slomka 3 Yd Run (David Cooper Kick)		14
7 plays, 64 yards, 3:17	6	14
THIRD QUARTER		
ARMY TD 7:46 Kell Walker 59 Yd Run (David Cooper Kick)		21
10 plays, 99 yards, 5:21	6	21
ARMY TD 5:07 Connor Slomka 3 Yd Run (David Cooper PAT failed)		27
3 plays, 27 yards, 1:24	6	27
ARMY TD 1:30 Kelvin Hopkins Jr. 63 Yd Run (Zach Potter PAT failed)		33
2 plays, 65 yards, 1:07	6	33
FOURTH QUARTER		
ARMY TD 14:23 Connor Slomka 8 Yd Run (David Cooper Kick)		40
4 plays, 39 yards, 1:54	6	40
ARMY TD 5:17 Christian Anderson 4 Yd Run (David Cooper Kick)		47
12 plays, 90 yards, 7:20	6	47

Team Stats	VMI	ARMY
First Downs	14	29
Passes for First	9	2
Rushes for First	3	26
Penalties for First	2	1
Third Down Efficiency	5-15	7-9
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-3	1-1
Total Yards	271	643
Total Plays	58	72
Avg Gain Per Play	4.7	8.9
Net Yards Rushing	40	594
Rushes	21	65
Yards Per Rush	1.9	9.1
Net Yards Passing	231	49
Comp-Att	23-37	4-7
Yards Per Pass	6.2	7.0
Times Sacked	0	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	0	-27
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	5	0
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	3	3
Penalty Yards	24	35
Fumbles	1	0
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Time of Poss	23:25	36:35

Individual Stats

RUSHING					
VMI	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Alex Ramsey	14	50	3.6	0	19
Korey Bridy	2	7	3.5	0	7
Reece Udinski	5	-17	-3.4	0	5
ARMY	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Kelvin Hopkins Jr.	16	208	13.0	1	63
Jabari Laws	9	97	10.8	1	27
Christian Anderson	7	82	11.7	1	48
Kell Walker	3	67	22.3	1	59
Connor Slomka	11	64	5.8	3	14
Rashaad Bolton	8	27	3.4	0	6
Sandon McCoy	6	21	3.5	0	6
Artice Hobbs IV	1	9	9.0	0	9
A.J. Howard	1	8	8.0	0	8
Jakobi Buchanan	2	7	3.5	0	4
Malik Hancock	1	4	4.0	0	4

PASSING							
VMI	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Reece Udinski	22	34	218	6.4	0	0	--
Jakob Herres	1	1	13	13.0	0	0	--
Reed King	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--
Chance Newman	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--
ARMY	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Kelvin Hopkins	4	7	49	7.0	0	1	85.7

RECEIVING					
VMI	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Jakob Herres	7	83	11.9	0	29
Javeon Lara	4	39	9.8	0	15
Rohan Martin	6	39	6.5	0	13
Max Brimigion	1	30	30.0	0	30
Alex Ramsey	4	28	7.0	0	21
Colby Rider	1	12	12.0	0	12
ARMY	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Camden Harrison	3	48	16.0	0	35
Kell Walker	1	1	1.0	0	1