

WEEK THIRTEEN
MINNESOTA at NORTHWESTERN

Morgan’s 4 TD passes lead No. 11 Gophers past Wildcats 38-22

EVANSTON, Ill. -- Tanner Morgan led No. 11 Minnesota to scores on its first three possessions and finished with four touchdown passes, and the Gophers bounced back from their first loss of the season with a 38-22 win over Northwestern on Saturday.

The Gophers (10-1, 7-1 Big Ten, No. 10 CFP), who lost at Iowa last week, clinched a share of the West Division title and clinched their sixth season with 10 or more wins.

“The word of the week was respond,” Minnesota coach P.J. Fleck said. “We needed to and they responded. That was a clear message from the beginning, that we had to start fast.

“That’s what championship football looks like -- come out of the gate and put 21 points on the board like that.”

Morgan, the Big Ten’s leading passer, came out firing following a week in the concussion protocol after absorbing back-to-back sacks by the Hawkeyes. The redshirt sophomore, listed as questionable until Saturday morning, has thrown 26 touchdowns this season to set a school record.

“We knew we had to come out fast, come out firing,” Morgan said. “We always talk about starting fast, accelerating in the middle and finishing strong.”

Fleck said Morgan was almost his old self, despite an abbreviated week of practice.

“Got to give him credit with the limited amount of reps he had to be able to play like he did,” Fleck said. “There were some things he was just a little off on today.”

Morgan threw three TD passes to Rashod Bateman and one to Tyler Johnson against Northwestern (2-9, 0-8). Bateman finished with 78 receiving yards and Johnson had 125, giving Minnesota its first pair of 1,000-yard receivers in season.

Rodney Smith finished with 77 rushing yards to give him 1,063 for the season.

Morgan zipped a 19-yard TD pass to Bateman in the corner of the end zone to end a 10-play, 56-yard drive on Minnesota’s first possession.

After Shannon Brooks ran in from 9 yards, Morgan hit Bateman for a 10-yard TD and 21-0 lead. Bateman’s other TD catch was a 7-yarder in the third quarter.

With quarterback Aidan Smith sidelined (hand), Northwestern turned to Hunter Johnson, who hadn’t started since the season opener. Andrew Marty entered early in the second quarter after Johnson went 0 for 2 and was sacked three times.

Marty threw a TD pass to Jace James and ran for two scores.

“(Johnson) was the most healthy quarterback we had to start the game who had experience,” Northwestern coach Pat Fitzgerald said. “When Hunter went down, it was Andrew’s opportunity.

“He was pretty efficient, I’m just happy for him.”

Joe Gaziano sacked Morgan for a safety early in the second quarter to get Northwestern on the board. Gaziano added another sack to give him 29 for his career, a school record.

LUCKY 7?

Minnesota has seven wins in Big Ten play for the first time,

TAKEAWAY

Minnesota: Morgan seems primed to lead Minnesota into the postseason. His third touchdown pass in the game eclipsed Adam Weber’s season mark of 24 set in 2007. The Gophers have their first 10-plus win season since 2003. Minnesota’s previous four seasons with 10 wins or more were in 1900, 1903, 1904 and 1905. This is Minnesota’s first 10-win year in regular-season play since 1905.

Northwestern: Since the Big Ten started playing a championship game in 2011, no team until 2019 Northwestern finished last in its division after playing in the title game the previous year. The Wildcats are in danger of going winless in conference play for the first time since the 1998 team went 0-8 in Gary Barnett’s final season.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
MINN	14	7	7	10	38
NW	0	9	7	6	22

Scoring Summary -----

FIRST QUARTER		MINN	NW
MINN TD 8:04	Rashod Bateman 19 Yd pass from Tanner Morgan (Michael Lantz Kick)		
10 plays, 56 yards, 5:36		7	0
MINN TD 5:04	Shannon Brooks 9 Yd Run (Michael Lantz Kick)		
5 plays, 45 yards, 1:46		14	0
SECOND QUARTER		MINN	NW
MINN TD 12:03	Rashod Bateman 10 Yd pass from Tanner Morgan (Michael Lantz Kick)		
8 plays, 73 yards, 4:43		21	0
NW SF 9:32	Joe Gaziano Safety		
1 play, -6 yards, 0:09		21	2
NW TD 2:52	Jace James 9 Yd pass from Andrew Marty (Charlie Kuhbander Kick)		
14 plays, 69 yards, 6:40		21	9
THIRD QUARTER		MINN	NW
MINN TD 10:03	Rashod Bateman 7 Yd pass from Tanner Morgan (Michael Lantz Kick)		
11 plays, 73 yards, 4:57		28	9
NW TD 3:27	Andrew Marty 2 Yd Run (Charlie Kuhbander Kick)		
15 plays, 64 yards, 6:36		28	16
FOURTH QUARTER		MINN	NW
MINN TD 13:20	Tyler Johnson 17 Yd pass from Tanner Morgan (Michael Lantz Kick)		
10 plays, 62 yards, 5:07		35	16
MINN FG 6:14	Michael Lantz 37 Yd Field Goal		
10 plays, 60 yards, 5:39		38	16
NW TD 2:01	Andrew Marty 1 Yd Run (Two-Point Pass Conversion Failed)		
8 plays, 77 yards, 4:13		38	22

Team Stats	MINN	NW
First Downs	23	14
Passes for First	11	3
Rushes for First	11	9
Penalties for First	1	2
Third Down Efficiency	9-11	7-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	1-1
Total Yards	423	223
Total Plays	62	61
Avg Gain Per Play	6.8	3.7
Net Yards Rushing	212	128
Rushes	39	49
Yards Per Rush	5.4	2.6
Net Yards Passing	211	95
Comp-Att	15-23	8-12
Yards Per Pass	9.2	7.9
Times Sacked	2	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-8	-27
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	1	6
Punt Average	42.0	42.3
Penalties	7	5
Penalty Yards	46	36
Fumbles	2	1
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Time of Poss	31:18	28:42

Individual Stats

RUSHING							
MINNESOTA	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Rodney Smith	15	77	5.1	0	13		
Mohamed Ibrahim	13	76	5.8	0	20		
Shannon Brooks	7	44	6.3	1	14		
Seth Green	1	25	25.0	0	25		
Tanner Morgan	3	-10	-3.3	0	0		
NORTHWESTERN	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Andrew Marty	16	52	3.3	2	11		
Evan Hull	14	51	3.6	0	11		
Drake Anderson	11	34	3.1	0	9		
Jesse Brown	4	31	7.8	0	14		
Hunter Johnson	4	-40	-10.0	0	0		
PASSING							
MINNESOTA	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Tanner Morgan	15	23	211	9.2	4	1	90.0
NORTHWESTERN	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Andrew Marty	8	10	95	9.5	1	0	79.9
Hunter Johnson	0	2	0	0.0	0	0	0.1
RECEIVING							
MINNESOTA	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Tyler Johnson	7	125	17.9	1	26		
Rashod Bateman	7	78	11.1	3	19		
Chris Autman-Bell	1	8	8.0	0	8		
NORTHWESTERN	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Riley Lees	3	53	17.7	0	40		
Malik Washington	1	11	11.0	0	11		
Jace James	1	9	9.0	1	9		
Trey Pugh	1	8	8.0	0	8		
Drake Anderson	1	8	8.0	0	8		
Ramaud Chiaokhiao-Bowman	1	6	6.0	0	6		