

# Hawkeyes obliterate Broncos

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – A massacre took place inside Kinnick Stadium on Saturday, and what a massacre it was.

All three phases – offense, defense and special teams – clicked for the Iowa Hawkeyes, as they routed Western Michigan 59-3 to move to 3-1 before opening Big Ten play next week. It didn't matter who was on the field, as the Hawkeyes played like sharks underwater that smelled blood in the water.

Iowa blew the game open in the second quarter while holding a 10-0 lead. Western Michigan punted the ball to junior wideout Kevonte Martin-Manley and he took it back 83 yards for Iowa's first punt return touchdown since Andy Brodell took one back against Iowa State in 2008.

Following another Bronco 3-and-out, Western Michigan rugby-style punted a line-drive to Martin-Manley and for the second time in as many returns, he made the Broncos pay by sprinting 63 yards to the end zone to put Iowa up 24-0.

"I was happy that they did that," Martin-Manley said about the Broncos punting to him just after he had already returned the previous punt for a score. "It was another opportunity to score again.

"When I did it, I was like, 'I can't believe that just happened.'"

Because this was the style of punting Western Michigan was accustomed to doing, the Hawkeyes put together a game plan that consisted of redshirt freshman wide receiver Riley McCarron lining up a few yards in front of Martin-Manley.

"The trick on the rugby punts is to field them," Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz said. "If you can field them cleanly, you're going to have a chance because the ball doesn't get up in the air too high. It's easier said than done, so Kevonte did a great job."

A Western Michigan field goal was countered by a seven-play scoring drive spanning 65 yards and capped off by a 4-yard rushing score from junior running back Mark Weisman. Moments later, senior cornerback B.J. Lowery returned a Tyler Van Tubbergen interception 35 yards for a touchdown to put Iowa ahead 38-3 at halftime.

"We were running man-to-man, Christian Kirksey and I. His man was on the line, so I was off a little bit," Lowery said about his first pick-six. "He pretty much had a good jam on the guy and I was able to work over the top and I picked it off."

As though déjà vu on special teams wasn't enough, the defense provided more of it early in the third quarter. The Broncos made a QB change by putting Zach Terrell in to start the second half and his first throw of the day was picked off by Lowery, who again scored on a 13-yard return to make it 45-3 in Iowa's favor.

"My job was to just backpedal because it was a smash route," Lowery said about the second pick. "We knew it was coming. Instead of me just dropping off like I was supposed to do, I just felt something and just took it."

Because the Hawkeyes were able to blow the game open, they were able to get some of their less heralded players to step up and make plays. Prior to the onslaught, Iowa got its second consecutive touchdown in as many weeks from sophomore receiver Jacob Hillyer. It also got a first touchdown catch for junior college transfer Damond Powell and as a result of four running backs being able to accumulate double-digit carries, sophomore Jordan Canzeri was able to record his first career rushing

touchdown – the final score of the day from the Hawkeyes.

As a result, Iowa was able to put together a strong showing from start to finish.

“You can’t play one half of football. That’s not what we’re trying to do,” sophomore quarterback Jake Rudock said following a performance where he was 10-of-15 passing for 134 yards and those two strikes to Hillyer and Powell. “We played both halves today and that’s really important.”

Now having won three straight, Iowa can set its sights on Big Ten play, starting with its annual Floyd of Rosedale battle with Minnesota Sept. 28 in Minneapolis. Kickoff from TCF Bank Stadium is slated for 2:30 p.m. Central and the game will air nationally on either ABC or ESPN2 as part of ESPN’s reverse mirror on Saturday afternoon games.