

# Braves blow past Greenville State on the road

By Nick Phillips  
Asst. Sports Editor

The UNCP football team's third season of football in modern history isn't over yet.

A 42-14 victory on the road against North Greenville in the regular-season finale Nov. 7 improves the Braves record to 9-1 as they await the NCAA Division II Football Playoff Selection Show on Nov. 8 to see if they will be among the 24 teams whose season will continue.

The Braves came into the game ranked in a variety of polls, which were updated at the beginning of November. In the American Football Coaches Association Division II Coaches' Top 25 Poll, UNCP sits at No. 10.

The D2Football.com Top 26 Media Poll has the Braves ranked at No. 19 and in the NCAA Super Region 2 Poll, the Braves check in with a No. 4 ranking.

The NCAA Super Region Poll is the poll that the NCAA uses in their playoff decision process.

## Rushers lead

The Braves finished their second-straight 9-1 season with strong efforts by junior quarterback Corey Smith and a rush-



UNCP running back Travis Daniels rushed his way for 82 yards against North Greenville in the Braves' regular season finale.

ing attack that totaled 222 yards on the day.

North Greenville scored early on a 49-yard punt return, and the game was tied 7-all after the

first quarter.

The Braves would go on to score 42 straight points before they allowed another North Greenville touchdown

late in the fourth quarter.

Eight different Braves tallied carries in the game. Junior Rashon Kennedy started the scoring for UNCP in the first quarter

with a 4-yard run.

Kennedy finished the game with 10 carries for 65 yards. Sophomore Travis Daniels scored twice in the second and

third quarters as part of his 11 carry, 82 yard performance.

Junior Keith Gore finished the Braves' scoring with his fourth quarter, 2-yard touchdown. Gore finished the game with eight carries for 29 yards.

Smith finished the day with 164 yards through the air, completing 13 of his 16 pass attempts while tossing two touchdowns. Junior Jamelle Banks finished the game with two catches for 44 yards, including Smith's first touchdown pass in the second quarter.

Senior L.J. Johnson hauled in a 16-yard touchdown from Smith in the third quarter as part of his three catch, 28 yard performance.

Overall, seven Braves tallied at least one reception on the day.

"I am very happy. I am very happy for both our players and our coaches," UNCP head coach Pete Shinnick said. "Our guys have worked really hard this year and it is going to pay off."

"We know that we have played a much tougher schedule this year than we did a year ago. I don't want to take anything from what we did a year ago, but we played better this year. We feel good about the position that we're in heading into tomorrow," he said.

# Defense leads Braves in 52-7 rout of Bobcats

By Matt Smith  
Sports Editor

Behind a staunch defensive effort, the Black and Gold football team dominated Frostburg State 52-7 on the road in Frostburg, Md., on Halloween night.

The No. 10 Braves held the Bobcats to just 86 yards of total offense, while controlling the Bobcats' offensive attack and allowing Frostburg State just seven first downs in the game.

"The defense just did a fantastic job for us today," UNCP head coach Pete Shinnick said. "They have played very solid for the past five weeks now. To hold them to nine yards rushing and 11 yards passing in the second half – that's just a great effort on our part."

"We learned a good lesson today in that you have to play with a lot of excitement and a lot of emotion no matter who the opponent is. We had a lot more life to us in the second half and that was a lot more fun for our guys," he said.

The Braves looked to excite early and they did, scoring on the game's first drive after Frostburg State punter Nick Payne had his punt blocked by the Black and Gold special teams unit.

Payne felt the pain of the block, as UNCP freshman defensive back D.J. Ellerbe scooped the ball up and returned it for the Braves' first of many touchdowns on the night.

The blocked punt return would be the Braves' lone score of the first quarter, but the Black and Gold defense held

Frostburg State to two more points to keep the Bobcats out of the end zone.

## Second quarter scores

After a low scoring first half, the Black and Gold offense found their groove in the second period of play, scoring two touchdowns before the end of the half.

The first came after a 5-play, 45-yard drive, as UNCP quarterback Cory Smith found redshirt-junior wide receiver St. Anthony Lloyd for an 11-yard strike to put the Braves ahead 14-0.

But the home team answered two drives later, as Smith was sacked on the Braves' next possession and fumbled. The Bobcats' Mike Ihekanwa recovered the ball on the Braves' 28-yard line, leaving Frostburg State with great field position to set up the score.

The Bobcats scored two plays later on an 18-yard rush by running back Anthony King to cut the UNCP lead to just seven at 14-7.

The offensive mishap may have been the Black and Gold's only mistake of the day, as the Braves drove down the field three series later for their third touchdown in the first half.

The combination of running backs Travis Daniels, Rashon Kennedy and Thomas Dove rushed for 37 yards on the scoring drive, with Kennedy punching the ball in at the 2-yard line to give the Braves a 21-7 lead.

The Black and Gold would cap off the second half scoring with a 24-yard field goal by sopho-



The Black and Gold mascot cheers on the Braves as they take a 52-7 road win over Frostburg State.

Photo by Charlie Pohlman

more place kicker Taylor Baskett to give the team a 17-point advantage heading into halftime.

## Style points

With the Braves solidly up in the second half, Shinnick relieved Smith of his quarterbacking duties, as the head coach put in redshirt-junior Garrett Sutphon to start the third quarter.

On the quarter's opening drive, Daniels and Kennedy again slashed through the Bobcat's defense for 28 more yards to set the Black and Gold up at the Frostburg State 23-yard line.

Sutphon completed the 69-yard drive with a 23-yard strike to senior wide receiver L.J. Johnson for his first touchdown of the day. With Baskett's kick, the

Braves took a 31-7 lead with 12 minutes left in the third period.

On the Bobcat's next drive, the Black and Gold defense sacked Frostburg State quarterback Josh Volpe on a key 3rd-and-10 play, forcing Frostburg State to punt from their 18-yard line. Payne's 36-yard punt was returned nine yard by UNCP's Jamal Williams, giving the Braves the ball at the 45-yard line in Frostburg State territory.

The Black and Gold wasted no time scoring their second touchdown of the quarter three minutes later, as a roughing the passer penalty on the Bobcats moved the Braves to the Frostburg State 13-yard line. Four plays later, senior running back Daniel Williams punched in a 1-yard run to

put the score at 38-7 in favor of the Black and Gold.

## Fourth quarter scores

With the game firmly in hand, the Braves ran the ball for much of the fourth quarter, racking up two more touchdowns in the process.

A 26-yard run by Keith Gore at the 13:15 mark of the final quarter and another touchdown by Kennedy just four minutes later sealed the game for the Braves, setting the final score at 52-7 for the visitors.

On the day, Gore led the Braves with 85 yards rushing on nine carries, as Kennedy, Daniels and Dove added 76 yards, 66 yards and 29 yards, respectively. For the game, UNCP outrushed Frostburg State by over

200 yards, as the Black and Gold finished with 265 yards on the ground to the Bobcat's 40.

Smith finished the game 8-for-15 with 56 yards and a touchdown, with Sutphon going 5-for-7 for 57 yards and a touchdown in relief.

Johnson finished the game as the team's leading receiver with three catches for 38 yards.

Defensively, freshman James Alexander and sophomore Ben Kurti led the Braves with five tackles apiece, with Alexander heading the way with two sacks.

The defense held Frostburg State to just 2.1 yards-per-play and forced an interception.

The win was the team's eighth of the season and the fourth road victory in 2009.