

OXFORD, Ohio – For the fourth straight year Western Michigan football will begin Mid-American Conference play 1-0 after a thrilling 40-39 victory over Miami inside Yager Stadium on Saturday afternoon.

It was a career day for freshman wide receiver Jayden Reed who tied the single-game school record with four receiving touchdowns on seven receptions and a career-high 137 yards. Reed tied the school record set by Greg Jennings back in 2005 against Ball State.

Reed averaged 19.6 yards per catch against the RedHawks and connected on touchdown passes of 10, 33, 27 and five. Through five games, Reed has amassed six receiving touchdowns which matches the amount by 2016 NFL Draft No. 5 overall pick Corey Davis had during his entire freshman campaign.

Returning to the field after missing the past two games due to injury, junior D'Wayne Eskridge led the Brown & Gold with seven receptions and 141 yards. It's the second time this season Eskridge has went over 100 yards receiving, recording 240 yards in the season opener against Syracuse. It was the second time this season the Broncos have had two 100-yard receivers.

Junior Jon Wassink torched the Miami defense, throwing for a career-high 439 yards and five touchdowns. He also rushed for a sixth touchdown, which would be the game-winner with 2:53 left in the fourth quarter. He completed 27-of-42 passes. Wassink became the first Bronco since Zach Terrell in 2016 against Buffalo to throw for over 400 yards in a game.

Defensively, WMU was led by the junior duo of Alex Grace and Drake Spears who each had eight tackles. The lone sack on the day came from sophomore Ralph Holley, who collected his first career sack late in the fourth quarter. In the secondary, redshirt senior Juwan Dowels had two pass breakups.

The Broncos amassed 562 total yards compared to Miami's 349. WMU dominated the time of possession, holding the ball for nearly 36 minutes compared to Miami's 24 minutes. On third and fourth down against Miami, WMU was a combined 10-for-16 and was 4-for-6 in the red zone.

Miami got off to a fast start returning the opening kick-off 99 yards for a touchdown. The Broncos responded with a nine play, 75-yard drive capped off by a 10-yard touchdown pass to Reed to tie the game.

After a Miami field goal, Wassink connected with Reed on his second touchdown of the day, from 33 yards out to take a 14-10 lead midway through the first. At the end of the quarter, the RedHawks were given two untimed downs due to Bronco penalty's and took advantage scoring on a 17-yard touchdown pass to take a 17-14 lead after 15 minutes of play.

Miami forced two WMU fumbles that led to a field goal and a touchdown as the RedHawks outscored the Broncos 10-0 in the second quarter to take a 27-14 lead into halftime.

The two teams traded punts early in the third before the Bronco offense came to life. Wassink connected with Eskridge on a 41-yard pass down the sideline to set up the third receiving touchdown of the day for Reed two plays later.

Miami scored on the ensuing drive to grab a 33-21 lead before senior Drake Harris earned his first career receiving touchdown at the end of the third on a three-yard touchdown pass.

On fourth and goal with 7:25 left to play, Wassink and Reed kept the Broncos going - Reed catching his fourth touchdown of the afternoon. Miami quickly responded with a four play, 72-yard drive to regain the lead, 39-34, with 6:26 left to play.

Trailing by five, Wassink and the Bronco offense embarked on an 11-play, 73-yard drive that lasted nearly four minutes. Wassink ended the drive with a QB sneak from the two-yard line to give WMU its first lead of the game. On the play prior the junior quarterback converted another key fourth down, scrambling for 14 yards. The Bronco two-point conversion was no good, giving WMU a one-point lead, 40-39, with 2:53 to go.

Miami had a chance at a potential game-winning field goal with 27 seconds left but Miami kicker Sam Sloman missed the 50-yarder wide right.

With the victory the Broncos improve their overall record to 3-2 and 1-0 in conference play Western Michigan returns home and will host Eastern Michigan on Saturday, Oct. 6 at noon.

Oct. 6 will be the Broncos' 95th annual Homecoming game, as well as Arbor Financial Youth Day. The Youth Day special Includes a Bronco Football game ticket and food voucher for \$14 with pregame activities in the Seelye Center. Fans can use the promo code **YOUTHDAY** and purchase tickets today at wmubroncos.com/tickets