Owls triumph in home opener

By Draven Dabrowski
Sports Writer

In what was a defensive battle, the Owls came out on top 10–3 of the American International Yellow Jackets on Saturday, Sept. 20, marking both their first home game of the season and the first victory of the Joe Loth era.

With 2,816 fans packed into Jess Dow Field, the Owls fed off the home energy of and delivered when it mattered.

Quarterbacks Brandon Jorgensen, a senior, and John Giller, a freshman, shared snaps throughout the game, with Giller being used mostly for designed quarterback runs.

"John gives us experience, and Brandon gives us really an elite arm talent," Head Coach Joe Loth said.

The Owls also showed off their powerful run game, using both their running backs throughout the game.

Running back John Amaning, a graduate student led the team with 106 yards on 18 carries. Following Amaning was running back Kieran Falzon, a junior, with 38 yards on 12 carries. He had the university's only touchdown.

"After the first quarter, we could tell we can run on these guys. As the game goes, coach is trying to spread the ball to everyone's hands. Hopefully, I get the ball as well," Amaning said.

While the ground game kept AIC's defense on its heels, the university also made key adjustments at halftime.

After committing several costly penalties in the first half, the Owls cleaned things up and played a disciplined second half without a single flag.

"You don't win games with halftime speeches; you win games with adjustments. We just had to make the right adjustments with offense and defense," Loth said.

Jorgensen provided balance through the air, throwing for 151 yards, including a 35-yard strike to wide receiver Seth Westover, a senior.

That play helped the Owls flip field position and set up scoring opportunities, leading to a clutch fourth-quarter drive, capped by kicker Daniel Benzi's, a sophomore, 24-yard field goal, which pushed the lead to 10–3.

The mix of rushing and passing allowed the Owls to control the tempo of the game and sustain drives against the Yellow Jackets defense.

On the other side of the ball, the university's defense set the tone from the opening kickoff, forcing AIC into long third downs and keeping their offense out of rhythm.

Linebacker Shane Kanterman, a senior, picked up 10 tackles and a pass breakup, while linebacker Dominick Barbuto, a graduate student, made his presence felt with eight stops and 2.5 tackles for loss.



PHOTOS | WILLIAM GAGNÉ

The teams shake hands after the game at Jess Dow Field.

"I was picking up on the cadence all game. Coach called my number. I just shot at the right time and made the play," Barbuto said.

For the players, the victory carried extra meaning as the first win for Joe Loth. Westover said the win felt amazing.

"It was great to see coach smile. Sometimes, he is stone cold, but to see him smiling is awesome," Westover said.

The victory gave the university its first taste of momentum heading into their next game.

The university will travel to Salisbury, North Carolina, on Saturday, Sept. 27 to face Catawba College before returning home to host Bentley University on Oct. 2 for Homecoming Weekend.



Quarterback Brandon Jorgensen, a senior, hands the ball off to running back John Amaning, a graduate student.

Penmen force draw, Owls still searching

By Julian Markese
Sports Editor

Men's soccer began their NE10 schedule against Southern New Hampshire University on Friday, Sept. 19 at Jess Dow Field.

The game was a tough test for a team still trying to find their footing and their first victory.

"When you play against a talented team like Southern New Hampshire, you have to be patient, and you have to be willing to suffer in difficult moments," Head Coach Kevin Anderson said.

The Owls would be the first to inflict suffering on their opponents, scoring in just the fourth minute. Defender Kazuki Amegavie, a sophomore, found himself on the end of a corner and directed the ball into the back of the net.

Defender and captain Edward Mensah, a graduate student, commanded the back line. The Owls offered clearance after clearance but struggled to stay patient in the middle third.

The team took a tentative 1–0 lead into the half. Tempers flared between the two teams heading into the locker room, a preview of the physical second half to come.

The Owls' lead would evaporate quickly. The Penmen scored twice in the first fifteen minutes of the second period.

After conceding the second goal, midfielder Ryad Benmessaoud, a freshman, rallied his teammates. He pointed to his own head, then pushed his open palms to the ground, signaling the necessity of calmness.

His teammates listened and responded. Just three minutes after conceding, attacking midfielder Samual Nagy, a graduate student, asked pressing questions of the Penmen defense.



PHOTOS | WILLIAM GAGNÉ

Forward Jake Novoshelski, a graduate student, tries to control the ball.

He beat one man, then two, then three, before slotting the ball into the net for the tying goal.

"I trusted myself, trusted my abilities and executed it," Nagy said.

He was dangerous all day. Both Nagy and his fellow midfielder Jeremy Martin, a graduate student, played with creativity and purpose.

Nagy's goal closed the accounts of both teams. Despite being dominated in possession, the Owls withstood the pressure and escaped with a point. The game ended in a 2–2 draw.

An unsatisfying result, but an invaluable 90 minutes spent together for a team looking to mesh as they hunt for more than just their first victory.

"Our goal is to win the national championship," Nagy said.

This purpose propels the team. Men's soccer holds a record six Division II national championships. Their coach was a member of the team that took home the 1992 title.

"This group has something. This group is a bit different than years past," Anderson said.

The process of building a team and culture is slow. It manifests itself only in small moments. Moments that the team and coach hope will coalesce into ultimate triumph.

The ability for the team to meet expectations hinges on four poignant nouns.

"Discipline, commitment, and I think if we can add concentration and execution, we've got the recipe," Anderson said.

The Owls face Pace University on Tuesday, Sept. 23, at home. Coach Anderson, as much as he may want to, cannot lace up his boots and play. Instead, he must rely on his tactics and hope his measurements are right.

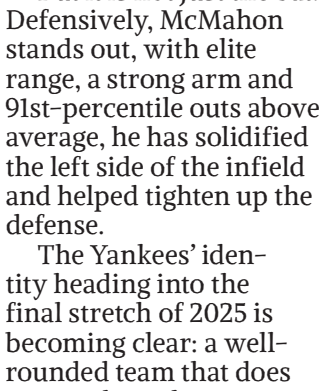
Fortunately, Anderson finds himself the leader of a group of believers.

"Everyone is buying into coach's project," Martin said.



Forward Jake Novoshelski, a graduate student, dribbles upfield.

Op-ed: Yankees ready for playoffs



By Matt Cain
Contributor

The New York Yankees have made their intentions clear: 2025 is about winning — now.

The pieces are finally starting to fall into place.

The lineup has found stability. The defense is sharper. The urgency is real.

Ryan McMahon has brought much-needed balance to a Yankees infield that had been patchwork for most of the season. Offensively, he adds left-handed power that plays perfectly in Yankee Stadium.

Over his last 39 games, McMahon has belted 10 home runs and posted an OPS over .800.

But it is not just the bat. Defensively, McMahon stands out, with elite range, a strong arm and 91st-percentile outs above average, he has solidified the left side of the infield and helped tighten up the defense.

The Yankees' identity heading into the final stretch of 2025 is becoming clear: a well-rounded team that does not need to rely on one superstar or one explosive inning to win games.

They are doing it with timely hitting, consistent defense and a rotation that has done just enough to keep them in the mix.

In an effort to stabilize the middle infield and reinforce defensive depth, the Yankees made an impactful move earlier in the year by acquiring José Caballero from the Tampa Bay Rays.

Caballero has given the Yankees another weapon off the bench and, at times, a defensive spark late in games.

Given Anthony Volpe's prolonged struggles in 2025, Caballero could emerge as a crucial asset for the Yankees in October. His defensive reliability and high baseball IQ make him a strong candidate to take over at shortstop during the postseason.

But it has not all been smooth.

The bullpen has been anything but reliable. Too often, solid outings by the rotation have gone to waste as late-inning leads vanish.

The losses continue to pile up, often overshadowing the team's improved lineup and defensive gains.

With McMahon anchoring third and Caballero providing depth and versatility, the Yankees have improved. If they want to make a real run at a championship, they will need to find consistency in the bullpen.

Now, with September coming and going, the schedule tightens, and the stakes rise. The Yankees are in the thick of the playoff race.

With a mix of veterans and rising stars, the Yankees have the kind of balance that makes them dangerous.

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