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Cowboys, Oilers remain optimistic

Glanville finds bright spots in last-minute loss to Steelers

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Oilers Coach Jerry Glanville said Monday he's not ready to paint a bad picture of Sunday's last-minute 37-34 loss to Pittsburgh.

"When you put yourself in a position to come down the field and win the game in the final minutes, somebody is doing something right," Glanville said.

"You have to be careful when you get beat not to take a paint brush and say it was a terrible game."

Houston quarterback Warren Moon scored his second touchdown with 1:30 to play, giving the Oilers a 34-31 lead.

winning points with 20 seconds to play.

"We had chances in their final drive to stop them numerous times," Glanville said. "We were in position to make the tackles but we didn't make them."

"They made the big plays all day. They made us miss so give them some credit."

Briester completed three touchdown passes, including two to Louis Lipps for 80 and 65 yards and the game-winner to Merrill Hoge for 16 yards.

Dwight Stone returned an Oiler kickoff 92 yards for the first kickoff touchdown return against the Oilers since 1973.

"I don't think we've given up that many big plays since New

York," Glanville said, referring to a 45-3 loss to the Jets Sept. 18.

"Ordinarily, we're a good tackling football team," Glanville said. "We'll just have to go back and emphasize that this week."

Moon ran for touchdowns of 2 and 3 yards and completed a 6-yard touchdown pass to Mike Rozier.

The Oilers, who struggled to beat Dallas 25-17 on Thanksgiving Day, started the game flat.

Houston trailed 17-13 at the half and fell behind 24-13 in the third quarter.

The offense recovered in the second half but the defense didn't.

"Pittsburgh is trying to salvage their season and I preached that

all week," Moon said. "This team (Oilers) is not to the point we can play a bad game and win."

The Oilers dropped to 9-5 for Sunday's AFC Central Division game against Cincinnati, 11-3, in the Astrodome.

Houston's final regular-season game is Dec. 18 at division rival Cleveland.

Willie Drewrey became the second Oiler punt returner in as many weeks to be lost for the season with an injury.

Kenny Johnson is out with a broken arm and Drewrey suffered a dislocated elbow against the Steelers.

Wide receiver Haywood Jefferson will replace Drewrey on the roster.

Hard-luck Cowboys remain in contention for top draft pick

IRVING (AP) — The Dallas Cowboys will have a tough time beating the Green Bay Packers out of the NFL's No. 1 draft pick, but they're looking solid gold for the second selection.

The Cowboys, who have lost a club-record 12 games, play at Washington on Sunday then must battle the Philadelphia Eagles in Texas Stadium on Dec. 18 with Coach Buddy Ryan's bunch in the NFC East playoff fight.

Green Bay matches Dallas' 2-12 record with two games left in which the Packers will be big underdogs.

The Packers will play host to Minnesota Sunday then travel to Phoenix on Dec. 18.

If Dallas ties with Green Bay, then the Packers get the No. 1 pick because of a weaker schedule.

With two games to go, Detroit and Tampa Bay each have 4-10 records as the contenders for the worst ledgers in the NFL.

Tampa Bay is at New England and plays host to Detroit while Detroit's other game is at Chicago.

The Cowboys have said they would take UCLA's Troy Aikman if he is available but they also have a need for a Lawrence Taylor-type outside linebacker.

Aikman is rated the top quarterback in the draft.

Derrick Thomas of Alabama or

Broderick Thomas of Nebraska could make an immediate impact on the Dallas defense.

Dallas lost its 10th consecutive game on Sunday, falling 24-21 to the Cleveland Browns.

The Cowboys slipped on a bad-luck banana peel again, built around a club-record 17 penalties for 142 yards.

Dallas' Roger Ruzek lost two field goals that were negated by a holding infraction and a tripping infraction.

The last penalty, called against veteran Randy White, erased a field goal that would have tied the score with 1:38 remaining.

"It was a place-kicker's nightmare," Ruzek said. "Two field

goals called back. Two of them wiped out of the record books."

Dallas Coach Tom Landry on Monday wasn't blaming the referees for Dallas' loss.

"We don't seem to be getting the breaks right now," Landry said. "That's the kind of season we are having. We are so close we do the wrong thing at the wrong time."

The Dallas players were a little stronger, saying the team is being picked upon because it's out of the playoffs.

The Cowboys' previous club record for losses was 11 in their expansion year of 1960. Dallas finished 0-11-1 that season.

Notre Dame holds top spot; Miami second in AP poll

Associated Press

Pitt and Penn State are the only teams to have played both No. 1 Notre Dame and No. 3 West Virginia this year, but their coaches are loathe to pick a winner in a Fiesta Bowl game that is being billed for the national championship.

"It's tough to do that," said Pitt's Mike Gottfried, whose team lost to Notre Dame 30-20 and to West Virginia 31-10.

"They're both good in every area and I can only say good things about both teams."

Penn State lost to Notre Dame 21-3 and to West Virginia 51-30 and, when Coach Joe Paterno was asked to compare them, he replied: "I don't think that's fair to either team. They're both fine football teams that have everything."

Everything but a 1-2 shootout in the Fiesta Bowl.

Notre Dame and West Virginia are the nation's only unbeaten college football teams but Miami's de-

fending national champions own the No. 2 ranking in The Associated Press' final regular-season poll, released Monday.

Notre Dame received 49 of 53 first-place votes and 1,055 of a possible 1,060 points from a nationwide panel of sports writers and sportscasters. There were no changes in the top seven places.

Miami, a 41-17 winner over Brigham Young, received one first-place vote and 994 points, while the other three first-place votes went to West Virginia, which totaled 950 points.

Fourth-ranked Florida State received 900 points, and was followed by Southern California with 839, Nebraska with 775 and Auburn with 767.

Arkansas and UCLA, which swapped places last week, did so again. Arkansas jumped from ninth place to eighth while UCLA slipped from eighth to ninth. Oklahoma again rounded out the Top Ten.

Connecticut gains respect, ranking in national polls

STORRS, Conn. (AP) — After years of playing like a punch-drunk fighter in a league of heavyweights, Connecticut's basketball team awoke Monday to find it had gained new respect.

The Huskies, with victories in their first two games, were ranked No. 18 in The Associated Press poll.

"I'm happy to be in the polls," Connecticut coach Jim Calhoun said Monday.

Meanwhile, Duke and Michigan continued to top the poll.

Duke, 4-0, received the same number of first-place votes as last week, 47, from a nationwide panel of sportswriters and broadcasters. Michigan, 5-0, held second place, with nine first-place votes.

Syracuse, 7-0, and Georgetown, 2-

0, swapped places from a week ago. Each received one first-place vote.

Connecticut and Seton Hall marked their first appearances among the Top 20 this season, joining Big East teams Syracuse, Georgetown and No. 17 Villanova. Seton Hall was No. 20 with a 5-0 record.

The Atlantic Coast Conference had four members in the Top Twenty — Duke, No. 8 North Carolina, No. 12 Georgia Tech and No. 19 North Carolina State — as did the Big Ten, with Michigan, No. 5 Iowa, No. 7 Illinois and No. 14 Ohio State.

Iowa received the other first-place vote in this week's poll. Illinois, 3-4, remained seventh while North Carolina, 6-1, jumped from tenth to eighth.

Sanders gets hero's welcome, shuns attention

STILLWATER, Okla. (AP) — Heisman Trophy winner Barry Sanders received a hero's welcome Monday upon his return to Oklahoma State and, as usual, tried to deflect the spotlight.

"On behalf of my teammates, I want to thank you guys for coming out here today," Sanders told a crowd of about 1,000. "We have one more favor to ask. We want to get these seniors 10 wins. With your support, I'm sure we can pull out a victory."

The Cowboys, 9-2 after a 45-42 victory over Texas Tech at Tokyo on

Sunday, play Wyoming in the Holiday Bowl at San Diego on Dec. 30.

The welcome back celebration was short as university officials, Coach Pat Jones and Sanders addressed the crowd for about five minutes soon after the team returned to the campus.

Before the arrival of the team by bus from Dallas, a disc jockey played music for the crowd — some of whom wore the school colors of orange and black.

One person wore a T-shirt bearing Sanders' name and "Let The Records Speak For Themselves," a ref-

erence to the records Sanders has broken this year.

Jones thanked those on hand for their support throughout the season and introduced team captains David Bailey, Garrett Limbrick, Hart Lee Dykes, Chris Stanley and Mike Gundy. Sanders was the last to be introduced.

Several players stood in front of and alongside the stage — a flatbed trailer on the practice field — as Sanders addressed the crowd.

Sanders was on the first of two buses to arrive on campus. The players were met with loud applause as

they started getting off the buses.

After the ceremony, Sanders was whisked away by an assistant coach and met with the media briefly.

He said the publicity surrounding his award, announced Saturday in New York, has become a hassle.

"I wish people would consider the way I feel about it, that it's no deal. ... Maybe in 20 years it will be me, but right now it's just another award."

Sanders said he would do what he could in the future to limit publicity. "I'll just stay away from it as much as possible, if I have to," he said.

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