

No. 1 Alabama routs struggling rival Tennessee, 45-7

Tuscaloosa, Alabama - Alabama went into halftime up by three touchdowns and not particularly happy.

The top-ranked Crimson Tide was in a better mood after finishing off a 45-7 victory over Tennessee on Saturday, setting off the rivalry's traditional lighting of celebratory cigars throughout Bryant-Denny Stadium.

Bo Scarbrough had two fourth-down touchdown runs and Alabama (8-0, 5-0 SEC) improved to 11-0 in the Third Saturday in October game under coach Nick Saban. Being up "only" 21-0 at halftime didn't cost the Tide.

"Yeah, we scored 21 points but it wasn't our type of football," quarterback Jalen Hurts said. "We kind of turned it up when we came back in the second half."

The stat sheet indicated it was more of a wire-to-wire domination. Alabama outgained Tennessee 604-108 in total yards even with reserves manning the offensive backfield most of the second half.

The result was another blow to the slumping Volunteers (3-4, 0-4) and embattled coach Butch Jones, who said against `Bama "every mistake you make is magnified."

Alabama, meanwhile, converted twice on fourth down from the 1 with defensive linemen Da'Ron Payne and Quinnen Williams serving as Scarbrough's lead blockers.

"When the ball's inside the 1-yard line, I don't know that there's ever been a time when we didn't go for it," Saban said.

Hurts capped the opening second half drive with a 14-yard touchdown pass to tight end Irv Smith and then watched from the sideline the rest of the way.

The Vols did snap a streak of 12-plus quarters without a touchdown after that move. Linebacker Daniel Bituli intercepted Tua Tagovailoa's pass and raced 97 yards down the left sideline for a touchdown.

After the play, defensive back Rashaan Gaulden was flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct after flipping a double bird at Alabama's student section. Gaulden apologized after the game.

"Well that's unacceptable," Jones said. "That's something that will be dealt with internally in our football program, but that's not who we are, that's not what we're about. But he knew that. We spoke about it, and he feels awful about it."

Tagovailoa added big plays after his own mistake. He scored on a 23-yard run and then hit fellow freshman Henry Ruggs III for a 60-yard touchdown with 4:49 left. Ruggs has five catches this season, all going for scores.

"We stuck with (Tagovailoa) so he could see that we had confidence in him and he continued to play well," Saban said.

Alabama made a goal-line stand in the fourth quarter with the stands mostly still packed and fans celebrating almost like it was a game-saver. Tennessee helped with a penalty from the 1.

"The thing that's just - it's absolutely tearing me up - we have second-and-goal on the 1, and we jump offside," Jones said. "Now it's second-and-goal on the 6."

And Alabama was left with something else to celebrate.

Tennessee has lost eight of its last 10 SEC games. Making his second career start, Jarrett Guarantano was held to 44 yards on 9-of-16 passing and sacked four times. Tailback John Kelly gained 63 yards on 12 carries.

Alabama's defense was strong as ever, but the offense and special teams each had turnovers. Hurts was a solid 13-of-21 passing for 198 yards. Damien Harris ran for 72 yards and a touchdown.

BIG PENALTIES

Tennessee defensive end Jonathan Kongbo had two personal foul penalties that helped set up Alabama touchdowns. Then, Gaulden topped that after the Vols' pick-six, drawing an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

Gaulden apologized after the game, saying the behavior "was very out of character."

"That's not how my parents raised me," he said. "That's not how a leader of the team should show their emotions on the field. I really, sincerely apologize to the student section at Alabama for disrespecting them."

	1	2	3	4	T
Tennessee	0	0	7	0	7
Alabama	7	14	10	14	45

	Tennessee	Alabama
1st Downs	7	35
3rd down efficiency	1 - 12	7 - 13
4th down efficiency	0 - 1	2 - 2
Total Yards	108	604
Passing	44	332
Comp-Att.	9 - 16	22 - 33
Yards per pass	2.8	10.1
Interceptions thrown	1	1
Rushing	64	272
Rushing Attempts	30	53
Yards per rush	2.1	5.1
Penalties	9 - 81	7 - 56
Turnovers	1	2
Fumbles lost	0	1
Interceptions thrown	1	1
Possession	25:09:00	34:51:00