

Tagovailoa, No. 1 Alabama blow out Arkansas State , 57-7

Tuscaloosa, Alabama - Tua Tagovailoa got Alabama rolling with a long touchdown pass, then another and another. Then he handed the reins to Jalen Hurts for pretty much more of the same.

Tagovailoa passed for three first-quarter touchdowns and Hurts added two more before halftime, a quarterback duet that was good enough to lead the top-ranked Crimson Tide to a 57-7 victory over Arkansas State on Saturday.

The Tide (2-0) racked up big plays on the way to a 40-0 halftime lead while rotating the quarterbacks who battled for the job throughout the offseason. Coach Nick Saban officially announced Tagovailoa would remain the starter Monday, but both were big parts of the plan again.

"I think that both guys did a really good job," Saban said. "I think both guys played well. We made some big plays in the passing game, we were pretty efficient."

Again.

It's the first time since 1925 Alabama has scored 50-plus points in each of its first two games. The combined six touchdown passes total was tied for second-most in Alabama history, matching Hurts and Tagovailoa's tally against Mercer last season.

Neither quarterback was made available to reporters after the game.

Tagovailoa finished 13 of 19 for 228 yards and four TDs. He led seven drives and tossed in runs of 15 and 12 yards in the second half. Tagovailoa had TD passes of 58 yards to Jerry Jeudy, 31 to Henry Ruggs III and 41 to DeVonta Smith - all in the first quarter - and tacked on a 14-yarder to Derek Kief.

Hurts, who started the past two seasons, was effective, too. He was 7 of 9 for 93 yards and rebounded strongly after losing a fumble at the goal line after taking a hit while airborne.

"It's tough to hold onto the ball when you're getting helicoptered like that," left tackle Jonah Williams said. "For him to be able to bounce back and drive us down the field, that's just what we've come to expect from him."

Najee Harris ran for a career-high 135 yards and a touchdown on 13 carries.

Justice Hansen couldn't get the Red Wolves' fast-paced offense going against the Tide defense. He was 15 of 36 for 140 yards with a touchdown and interception after tying a school-record with six touchdown passes last week.

Cornerback Saivion Smith returned an interception 38 yards for the final touchdown before the half. It was the Tide's third non-offensive touchdown of the season already and second pick-six.

Alabama outgained Arkansas State 599-391 in total yards.

"Considerably the best team I've seen in pads or on film in a long time," Red Wolves coach Blake Anderson said. "I talked to Coach Saban before the game, asked him if he knew of any weaknesses, but he didn't share any with me."

The Sun Belt Conference favorites couldn't muster a challenge, a la league mate Appalachian State versus Penn State last week. The Red Wolves didn't quit, failing on an onside kick attempt after opening the third quarter with a touchdown drive featuring a 25-yard catch by Hansen from wide receiver Darveon Brown.

This one had the feel of a *name-your-score type game* early. It's unclear how long the Tide will keep rotating quarterbacks, but Joseph Bulovas might be the new placekicker. Tide has outscored its first two opponents 108-21 .

Alabama's new kicker, Austin Jones, had his second and third missed extra point attempts in the first half. Tide students cheered when Bulovas made his first PAT try. He also made a 39-yard field goal.

Defensive lineman Isaiah Buggs aggravated an ankle injury sustained last week and could have returned, if needed, Saban said. He said backup cornerback Jaylen Armour-Davis suffered a knee injury in pre-game warmups and said "it doesn't seem good."

	1	2	3	4	Total
Arkansas State (1 - 1)	0	0	7	0	7
Alabama (2 - 0)	19	21	10	7	57

	Arkansas State	Alabama
1 st Downs	19	26
3 rd down efficiency	4 - 19	10 - 15
4 th down efficiency	43135	0 - 0
Total Yards	391	599
Passing	218	321
Comp-Att	22 - 51	20 - 29
Yards per pass	4.3	11.1
Interceptions thrown	1	0
Rushing	173	278
Rushing Attempts	31	44
Yards per rush	5.6	6.3
Penalties	10 - 84	4 - 35
Turnovers	1	1
Fumbles lost	0	1
Interceptions thrown	1	0
Possession	28:16	31:44