

WEEK ONE
WEST VIRGINIA VS TENNESSEE

CHARLOTTE, N.C. -- It isn't in Will Grier's nature to panic.

So two dropped touchdown passes, a 10-minute drive by the opposing offense and an hour-long weather delay at halftime weren't about to distract the West Virginia senior quarterback on Saturday.

Grier got his Heisman Trophy campaign off to an impressive start, throwing for 429 yards and five touchdowns as the 17th-ranked Mountaineers pounded Tennessee 40-14 to spoil Jeremy Pruitt's head coaching debut.

Leading 13-7 at halftime, the Associated Press preseason All-American turned up the heat in the third quarter, connecting on touchdown passes of 33 yards to David Sills, 28 yards to Gary Jennings, and 14 yards to Kennedy McCoy as the Mountaineers opened a 33-14 lead.

Grier, who grew up in the Charlotte area watching Carolina Panthers games and once threw for 10 TD passes in a high school play-off game for Davidson Day, was 14 of 19 for 275 yards and four TDs in the second half.

"He's such a calm, collected kid that I don't think all of that affected him in any way," said West Virginia offensive coordinator Jeff Spavital. "He came out in the second half and just caught fire."

Grier said the Mountaineers used the extra time at halftime to eat and hydrate -- and figure out how to beat the Vols defense.

"It took us a while to get started, but especially in the second half I had a good understanding of what they were doing and what we wanted to do against them," Grier said.

Coach Dana Holgorsen said Grier settled down nicely in the second half and did a better job of getting the ball out of his hands quicker, instead of trying to scramble.

"That's the Will we need to see," Holgorsen said.

Sills picked up where he left off last season when he had 18 touchdown receptions.

Grier's favorite target had seven grabs for 140 yards and two TDs. Jennings had a big game, too, using his size to catch six passes for 113 yards.

"Will showed out today," Sills said. "He makes my job easy. I just have to catch it when it is near me."

Tennessee defensive tackle Shy Tuttle said the Vols simply didn't come ready to play in the second half.

"We came out with high intensity in the first half. The second half we just didn't match the intensity and it got away from us," Tuttle said.

PRUITT'S FIRST LOSS

Pruitt has won six national championships as a defensive coach, including last year at Alabama. But his Vols had no answer for Grier and the high-powered Mountaineers offense.

Pruitt took blame for his first loss as the head coach.

"How your team plays tells you what kind of coach you are, and their team played better than our team today -- so that's on me," Pruitt said. "I have to get these guys where they execute at a higher level and they believe in themselves. And I think we will do that."

JORDAN RUNS

Tim Jordan ran for 118 yards on 20 carries and a touchdown for Tennessee, which had 165 yards rushing on 38 carries.

THE TAKEAWAY

Tennessee: Jarrett Guarantano got the starting nod at quarterback over Keller Chryst and played all but the final series. That could change next week. The Vols had only one passing play of longer than 20 yards under Guarantano, who was limited to 172 yards passing. Pruitt said after the game that Chryst will get a chance to play some next week against East Tennessee State. "We need to play him," Pruitt said.

West Virginia: While Grier lived up to his preseason hype, what might have been most impressive for the Mountaineers was the play of their defense in holding the Vols to just two touchdowns. They set the tone for the game by forcing Tennessee to go three-and-out on the game's first possession after two tackles for a loss of 15 yards. "There were questions about people had about our defense and I think our kids responded," said defensive coordinator Tony Gibson.

INJURIES

Tennessee: The Vols lost running back Ty Chandler to an ankle injury in the first half. He did not return.

West Virginia: Linebacker Charlie Benton left the game in the first half with a sprained knee and did not return.

POLL IMPLICATIONS:

The win will certainly do nothing to hurt West Virginia's preseason ranking, but may not do much to improve it either given Tennessee is in a rebuilding mode following a 4-8 season.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
WVU	10	3	20	7	40
TENN	0	7	7	0	14

Scoring Summary -----

	WVU	TENN
FIRST QUARTER		
WVU FG 11:00		
Evan Staley 26 Yd Field Goal		
7 plays, 39 yards, 2:25	3	0
WVU TD 3:32		
T.J. Simmons 59 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick)		
5 plays, 85 yards, 2:18	10	0
SECOND QUARTER		
TENN TD 6:13		
J. Guarantano pass, to D. Wood-Anderson for 1 yd for a TD, (B. Cimaglia KICK)		
17 plays, 78 yards, 8:47	10	7
WVU FG 0:00		
Evan Staley 35 Yd Field Goal		
8 plays, 72 yards, 1:52	13	7
THIRD QUARTER		
WVU TD 12:54		
David Sills V 33 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick)		
4 plays, 68 yards, 2:06	20	7
WVU TD 8:09		
Gary Jennings Jr. 28 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick)		
7 plays, 60 yards, 2:49	27	7
TENN TD 6:09		
T. Jordan run for 4 yds for a TD, (B. Cimaglia KICK)		
5 plays, 75 yards, 2:00	27	14
WVU TD 1:15		
Kennedy McKoy 14 Yd pass from Will Grier (Two-Point Pass Conversion Failed)		
9 plays, 78 yards, 4:54	33	14
FOURTH QUARTER		
WVU TD 2:02		
David Sills V 10 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick)		
8 plays, 98 yards, 4:41	40	14

	WVU	TENN
Team Stats		
First Downs	26	19
Total Yards	547	301
Total Plays	61	63
Avg Gain Per Play	9.0	4.8
Net Yards Rushing	118	129
Rushes	27	38
Yards Per Rush	4.4	3.4
Net Yards Passing	429	172
Comp-Att	25-34	19-25
Yards Per Pass	12.6	6.9
Times Sacked	1	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	7	4
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	1	1
Punt Average	-1.0	6.0
Penalties	4	6
Penalty Yards	35	48
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Possession	27:37	32:23

Individual Stats

RUSHING

WVU	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Martell Pettaway	9	56	6.2	0	22
Leddie Brown	8	33	4.1	0	11
Kennedy McKoy	4	18	4.5	0	8
Marcus Simms	1	5	5.0	0	5
Alec Sinkfield	1	4	4.0	0	4
Tevin Bush	1	2	2.0	0	2
Will Grier	3	0	0.0	0	4

TENN	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Tim Jordan	20	118	5.9	1	30
Madre London	5	12	2.4	0	9
Jeremy Banks	5	11	2.2	0	5
Josh Palmer	1	7	7.0	0	7
Ty Chandler	4	-4	-1.0	0	5
Jarrett Guarantano	3	-15	-5.0	0	2

PASSING

WVU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Will Grier	25	34	429	12.6	5	0	91.0
TENN	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Jarrett Guarantano	19	25	172	6.9	1	0	63.2

RECEIVING

WVU	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
David Sills V	7	140	20.0	2	38
Gary Jennings Jr.	6	113	18.8	1	30
T.J. Simmons	1	59	59.0	1	59
Marcus Simms	2	40	20.0	0	32
Trevon Wesco	2	35	17.5	0	29
Alec Sinkfield	2	15	7.5	0	9
Kennedy McKoy	1	14	14.0	1	14
Jovani Haskins	1	9	9.0	0	9
Dominique Maiden	1	8	8.0	0	8
Tevin Bush	1	1	1.0	0	1
Martell Pettaway	1	-5	-5.0	0	0
TENN	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Marquez Callaway	7	85	12.1	0	22
Josh Palmer	3	33	11.0	0	16
Jauan Jennings	2	29	14.5	0	19
Tim Jordan	2	11	5.5	0	8
Jeremy Banks	1	10	10.0	0	10
Jordan Murphy	1	5	5.0	0	5
Dominick Wood-Anderson	1	1	1.0	1	1
Brandon Edward Johnson	1	1	1.0	0	1
Cedric Tillman	1	-3	-3.0	0	0