

**REDBOX BOWL
ILLINOIS VS CALIFORNIA**

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- As a freshman a year ago, Chase Garbers was benched at halftime for ineffectiveness during his first trip to a bowl game. The California quarterback made his second appearance in the postseason much more memorable for both himself and the Golden Bears.

Garbers threw four touchdown passes and ran for another score, leading California to a 35-20 win over Illinois on Monday in the Redbox Bowl.

"He's taken that next step and he's worked at it, whether it's the weight room, meetings, practice" Golden Bears coach Justin Wilcox said. "He has just continued to work at it and guys respect him because of how hard he works. It really showed today."

Garbers, who had been in and out of the lineup all season because of a shoulder injury, got going after being sacked on the first play from scrimmage and throwing an incomplete pass on the second. The offensive MVP of the game, Garbers completed 22 of 31 passes for 272 yards with TD passes of 4, 3, 2 and 6 yards. He also scored on quarterback sneak from the 1 early in the second quarter while helping the Bears set a season-high for scoring.

It was significantly different than 2018, when Garbers threw three first-half interceptions against TCU in the Cheez-It Bowl and spent the remainder of the game on the sidelines.

"It went a lot better today than last year," Garbers said. "It just speaks to the guys in our offensive room and the team and how hard we work. We knew playing Illinois there would be shots we needed to take. You just have to execute those shot plays."

The Bears won all seven games this season when the oft-injured Garbers played more than one half.

Christopher Brown Jr. ran for 120 yards on 20 carries, and Makai Polk caught five passes for a season-high 105 yards as Cal (8-5) won its first bowl game since 2015.

Brandon Peters passed for 273 yards and one touchdown for Illinois (6-7) in his return after sitting out the regular-season finale with a concussion. Peters, who was shaken up again after diving out of bounds following a scramble late in the fourth quarter, completed 22 of 37 passes and added a team-high 68 rushing yards.

The Illini lost despite outgaining the Bears in total yards 450-395.

"We didn't play well enough. You have to give Cal credit for that," Illinois coach Lovie Smith said. "Sometimes yards can be a little misleading. They got in the end zone more than we did."

The strong showing by Garbers offset an uneven day by California's defense.

The Bears allowed a field goal and touchdown on the Fighting Illini's first two drives, then surrendered a late field goal before halftime.

Illinois' offense was mostly stagnant after that, while California pulled away.

The Bears had lost three of their previous four bowl games.

California led 14-10 late in the second quarter before the teams combined for 10 points in the final 25 seconds.

After Wilcox made the decision to go for it on a 4th-and-goal, Garbers threw a short swing pass to Brown, who stiff-armed Illinois linebacker Tolson Khalan before reaching the end zone.

Peters helped the Illini answer quickly. He completed three consecutive passes for 58 yards, setting up a 30-yard field goal by James McCourt.

THE TAKEAWAY

California: The Bears put a nice ending on their roller-coaster season with their third consecutive win. Linebacker Evan Weaver was stopped short in his bid to set the NCAA single-season record for tackles, but that was one of the few things that didn't go Cal's way. Garbers might have needed this game as much as anybody and it bodes well for the entire offense heading into next year.

Illinois: There was never much consistency to the offense and the secondary was repeatedly beaten for big gains, a bad combination on a day when California's quarterback had a career game. Smith acknowledged before the game that he felt the Illini were already a year ahead of schedule, so in a way, they were playing with house money. But with three consecutive losses to end the year, much of that progress will be overshadowed.

NO RECORD FOR WEAVER

Weaver had nine tackles against Illinois, giving him 182 on the season. The record of 193 was set by Texas Tech's Lawrence Flu-gence in 2002.

DELAY, DELAY, DELAY

Illinois' offense continually put itself in bad position with three delay of game penalties. "Two of them were my fault," Peters said. "I just wasn't paying attention to the play clock."

TWICE IN TEN

This is Cal's second eight-win season in the past decade. The Bears also went 8-5 in 2015 under then-coach Sonny Dykes.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
CAL	7	14	7	7	35
ILL	10	3	0	7	20

Scoring Summary -----

	CAL	ILL
FIRST QUARTER		
ILL FG 10:20		
James McCourt 25 Yd Field Goal		
9 plays, 64 yards, 2:21	0	3
CAL TD 7:09		
Collin Moore 4 Yd pass from Chase Garbers (Greg Thomas Kick)		
6 plays, 79 yards, 3:11	7	3
ILL TD 0:10		
Daniel Barker 5 Yd pass from Brandon Peters (James McCourt Kick)		
15 plays, 75 yards, 6:59	7	10
SECOND QUARTER		
CAL TD 12:12		
Chase Garbers 1 Yd Run (Greg Thomas Kick)		
8 plays, 84 yards, 2:58	14	10
CAL TD 0:25		
Christopher Brown Jr. 3 Yd pass from Chase Garbers (Greg Thomas Kick)		
12 plays, 97 yards, 4:55	21	10
ILL FG 0:01		
James McCourt 30 Yd Field Goal		
4 plays, 58 yards, 0:25	21	13
THIRD QUARTER		
CAL TD 10:45		
Gavin Reinwald 2 Yd pass from Chase Garbers (Greg Thomas Kick)		
7 plays, 56 yards, 2:07	28	13
FOURTH QUARTER		
CAL TD 11:06		
Nikko Remigio 6 Yd pass from Chase Garbers (Greg Thomas Kick)		
12 plays, 88 yards, 5:36	35	13
ILL TD 8:01		
Reggie Corbin 6 Yd Run (James McCourt Kick)		
9 plays, 75 yards, 3:05	35	20

	CAL	ILL
Team Stats		
First Downs	24	24
Passes for First	13	14
Rushes for First	6	8
Penalties for First	5	2
Third Down Efficiency	6-13	8-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-1	0-1
Total Yards	395	450
Total Plays	68	77
Avg Gain Per Play	5.8	5.8
Net Yards Rushing	123	165
Rushes	37	38
Yards Per Rush	3.3	4.3
Stat Name		
Net Yards Passing	272	285
Comp-Att	22-31	23-39
Yards Per Pass	8.8	7.3
Times Sacked	3	2
Yds Lost To Sacks	-25	-11
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	6	5
Punt Average	45.2	41.6
Penalties	5	10
Penalty Yards	45	89
Fumbles	0	2
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	30:53	29:07

Individual Stats

RUSHING							
	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long		
California							
Christopher Brown Jr.	20	120	6.0	0	54		
Marcel Dancy	2	11	5.5	0	6		
Alex Netherda	2	8	4.0	0	7		
DeShawn Collins	2	3	1.5	0	2		
Chase Garbers	11	-19	-1.7	1	4		
Illinois							
Brandon Peters	8	68	8.5	0	30		
Reggie Corbin	14	41	2.9	1	12		
Dre Brown	11	39	3.5	0	12		
Ra'Von Bonner	5	17	3.4	0	5		
PASSING							
	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
California							
Chase Garbers	22	31	272	8.8	4	0	84.6
Illinois							
Brandon Peters	22	37	273	7.4	1	1	77.5
Cam Miller	1	1	12	12.0	0	0	43.4
Team	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--

RECEIVING

	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
California					
Makai Polk	5	105	21.0	0	38
Jake Tonges	3	65	21.7	0	25
Nikko Remigio	4	36	9.0	1	25
Kekoa Crawford	2	29	14.5	0	18
Christopher Brown Jr.	3	17	5.7	1	14
DeShawn Collins	2	11	5.5	0	7
Collin Moore	1	4	4.0	1	4
Marcel Dancy	1	3	3.0	0	3
Gavin Reinwald	1	2	2.0	1	2
Illinois					
Donny Navarro	6	77	12.8	0	29
Daniel Barker	3	55	18.3	1	40
Trenard Davis	2	43	21.5	0	30
Justice Williams	1	22	22.0	0	22
Carlos Sandy	4	22	5.5	0	8
Dre Brown	2	17	8.5	0	11
Casey Washington	1	14	14.0	0	14
Richie Petitbon	0	14	0.0	0	14
Griffin Palmer	1	12	12.0	0	12
Isaiah Williams	3	9	3.0	0	4