Ehlinger and Texas rally to 49-24 win over Texas Tech

AUSTIN, Texas -- A season of high expectations for Texas still fell far short of its promise, and coach Tom Herman may still shake up his staff.

Yet Sam Ehlinger and the Longhorns closed out the regular season with an emphatic victory that will guarantee a winning record regardless of what happens in the bowl season.

Ehlinger passed for two touchdowns, ran for another and the Longhorns rallied from an early hole for a 49-24 win over Texas Tech on Friday.

"We all know this is not where we hoped we would be to begin the season, but to send these seniors out (with a win) that was our mission," Herman said. "Nothing that happened prior to this week mattered."

Texas fell behind 14-0 in the first quarter before Ehlinger and the Longhorns came roaring back. Ehlinger scored his first rushing touchdown in five games, and later connected on scoring strikes of 75 yards to Devin Duvernay and 26 yards to Jake Smith.

Ehlinger finished with 348 yards passing and ran for 83 yards on 10 carries. Roschon Johnson added 105 yards rushing and three touchdowns.

Texas (7-5, 5-4 Big 12) started the season ranked in the Top 10 after last season's Sugar Bowl victory and figured among the favorites for the Big 12 title. But the Longhorns stumbled badly over the second half of Herman's third season and a loss Friday would have meant Texas had to win its bowl game to have a winning season.

Texas avoided that kind of December pressure thanks to the Longhorns offense playing its best football since early October.

Herman said Friday's win sent a message that the program is "going to be okay," even as he evaluates whether to make staff changes in the offseason.

"Things are still headed in the right direction," Herman said. "The kids are fighting."

Texas has had at least four losses every season for a decade and went through a stretch of three straight losing seasons before Herman arrived.

Ehlinger, who raised expectations for the program when he declared "We're back!" after last season's Sugar Bowl win, said the program is in a good spot despite its slip backward.

"If you had told Texas fans three years ago that we would have seven wins and a headed to a bowl game and had a chance to win eight, I think people would be pretty happy," Ehlinger said. "Overall, we did a great job."

Texas Tech (4-8, 2-7) jumped out early with two quick touchdown drives as quarterback Jett Duffey was carving up the Longhorns defense. But the Red Raiders also had three drives end on downs deep in Texas territory as Texas Tech's first-year coach Matt Wells chased an upset win to end the season. Duffey passed for 398 yards.

"We needed touchdowns and I wanted to be aggressive," Wells said.

THE TAKEAWAY

Texas Tech: The Red Raiders were already suspect on defense and badly missed linebacker Jordyn Brooks, their leading tackler. Brooks is a finalist for Butkus Award given to the nation's best linebacker and he was a pregame scratch from the lineup because of a shoulder injury. His absence was most notable every time Ehlinger took off running up the middle of the field.

Texas: After a four-game slump, the Longhorns played the kind of offense that was on display at the beginning of the season when they started 5-2. Ehlinger passed for more than 300 yards for the fourth time this season and Duvernay topped 100 yards receiving for the sixth time.

JUST MISSED

Duvernay had 199 yards on six catches, just missing on being just the third Texas receiver to gain at least 200 yards and the first since Jordan Shipley had a school record 273 yards against Central Florida in 2009.

BIG PRESSURE

Texas has struggled to pressure opposing quarterbacks all season. That changed Friday as the Longhorns sacked Duffey four times, the most in 10 games.

Senior defensive tackle Malcolm Roach had one of the sacks.

"Not a lot was on the line," Roach said. "We really had nothing to lose."

Final	1	2	3	4	T
TTU	14	7	3	0	24
TEX	6	22	14	7	49

Scoring Summary ----------------

FIRST QUARTER	TTU	TEX
TTU TD 9:10 KeSean Carter 13 Yd pass from Jett Duffey (Trey Wolff Kick)		
11 plays, 80 yards, 2:09	7	0
TTU TD 4:14 SaRodorick Thompson 10 Yd Run (Trey Wolff Kick)		
6 plays, 76 yards, 2:39	14	0
TEX TD 0:54 Sam Ehlinger 10 Yd Run (Cameron Dicker PAT blocked)		
6 plays, 75 yards, 3:20	14	6
SECOND QUARTER	**TTU**	**TEX**
TEX TD 13:09 Daniel Young 3 Yd Run (Sam Ehlinger Pass to Devin Duvernay for Two-Point Conversion)		
5 plays, 64 yards, 1:38	14	14
TTU TD 8:13 Erik Ezukanma 24 Yd pass from Jett Duffey (Trey Wolff Kick)		
2 plays, 24 yards, 0:23	21	14
TEX TD 8:02 Devin Duvernay 75 Yd pass from Sam Ehlinger (Cameron Dicker Kick)		
1 play, 75 yards, 0:11	21	21
TEX TD 1:22 Roschon Johnson 1 Yd Run (Cameron Dicker Kick)		
13 plays, 74 yards, 5:36	21	28
THIRD QUARTER	**TTU**	**TEX**
TEX TD 8:52 Jake Smith 26 Yd pass from Sam Ehlinger (Cameron Dicker Kick)		
7 plays, 82 yards, 1:56	21	35
TTU FG 6:09 Trey Wolff 23 Yd Field Goal		
12 plays, 70 yards, 2:43	24	35
TEX TD 2:35 Roschon Johnson 1 Yd Run (Cameron Dicker Kick)		
9 plays, 74 yards, 3:34	24	42
FOURTH QUARTER	**TTU**	**TEX**
TEX TD 8:50 Roschon Johnson 1 Yd Run (Cameron Dicker Kick)		
5 plays, 24 yards, 1:11	24	49

Team Stats	TTU	TEX
First Downs	26	29
Passes for First	20	14
Rushes for First	4	13
Penalties for First	2	2
Third Down Efficiency	7-16	6-12
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-4	0-1
Total Yards	470	610
Total Plays	82	76
Avg Gain Per Play	5.7	8.0
Net Yards Rushing	71	262
Rushes	24	48
Yards Per Rush	3.0	5.5
Net Yards Passing	399	348
Comp-Att	36-58	19-28
Yards Per Pass	6.9	12.4
Times Sacked	1	4
Yds Lost To Sacks	-5	-26
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	4	5
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	4	9
Penalty Yards	32	100
Fumbles	2	0
Fumbles Lost	2	0
Time of Poss	25:51	34:09

Individual Stats

RUSHING

TEXAS TECH	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
SaRodorick Thompson	16	86	5.4	1	19
Jax Welch	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
Jett Duffey	7	-14	-2.0	0	8
TEXAS	**Rush**	**Yds**	**Avg**	**TD**	**LONG**
Roschon Johnson	23	105	4.6	3	16
Sam Ehlinger	10	83	8.3	1	18
Daniel Young	8	41	5.1	1	17
Keaontay Ingram	2	17	8.5	0	11
Devin Duvernay	2	10	5.0	0	8
Casey Thompson	2	9	4.5	0	9
Team	1	-3	-3.0	0	0

PASSING

TEXAS TECH	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Jett Duffey	36/58		399	6.9	2	0	54.6
TEXAS	**Comp**	**Att**	**Yds**	**Y/A**	**TD**	**Int**	**QBRat**
Sam Ehlinger	19/27		348	12.9	2	0	95.8
Roschon Johnson	0/1		0	0.0	0	0	41.2

RECEIVING

TEXAS TECH	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
KeSean Carter	11	150	13.6	1	52
Erik Ezukanma	7	135	19.3	1	29
T.J. Vasher	5	42	8.4	0	15
R.J. Turner	4	35	8.8	0	18
Jax Welch	1	10	10.0	0	10
McLane Mannix	2	9	4.5	0	5
Travis Koontz	1	7	7.0	0	7
SaRodorick Thompson	4	7	1.8	0	4
Donta Thompson	1	4	4.0	0	4
TEXAS	**Rec**	**Yds**	**Avg**	**TD**	**LONG**
Devin Duvernay	6	199	33.2	1	75
Jake Smith	3	51	17.0	1	26
Malcolm Epps	2	42	21.0	0	36
Brennan Eagles	3	20	6.7	0	8
Marcus Washington	1	16	16.0	0	16
Jared Wiley	1	15	15.0	0	15
Roschon Johnson	2	4	2.0	0	5
Keaontay Ingram	1	1	1.0	0	1