

WEEK TWO
BUFFALO at PENN ST

Clifford’s 4 TDs lead No. 15 Penn State over Buffalo 45-13

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. -- Sean Clifford turned in an all-around performance in another lopsided win for Penn State.

Clifford threw for 280 yards and four touchdowns and ran 11 times for 51 to lead the No. 15 Nittany Lions back from a halftime deficit to beat Buffalo 45-13 on Saturday night. “Sean’s able to make plays with his mind, he’s able to make plays with his arm and to-night he made plays with his feet as well,” coach James Franklin said.

Clifford, the Lions’ first-year starter, opened the scoring with a 28-yard pass to Jahan Dotson on Penn State’s second drive. He tossed a pair of TDs to tight end Pat Freiermuth in the third quarter after cornerback John Reid’s 37-yard interception return put Penn State up for good.

Noah Cain added a 2-yard TD run to give Penn State’s a 35-13 lead heading into the fourth.

“We weren’t executing in the first half,” Clifford said. “I take the blame for that. We pulled together and talked through some things and got it going in the second.”

The Nittany Lions (2-0) trailed 10-7 at half after the Bulls (1-1) had dominated time of possession to that point.

Quarterback Matt Myers hooked up with tight end Julien Bourassa for a 5-yard score late in the second quarter. Alex McNulty kicked a pair of field goals for the Bulls.

“They played really hard, competed really well for the first 30 minutes,” Buffalo coach Lance Leipold said. “Came out in the second half and, obviously, a big switch in momentum.”

Jaret Patterson led Buffalo (1-1) with 75 yards on 23 carries while Myers finished 16 for 31 for 236 yards.

BIG PICK-SIX

Franklin called Reid’s interception the turning point in the game. Players along Penn State’s sideline erupted when the fifth-year senior stepped in front of Antonio Nunn’s route, snagged Myers’ underthrown pass and sprinted untouched down the sideline.

It was the second straight game with an interception for Reid who’s just over two years removed from a serious knee injury that cost him all of 2017.

“It was huge,” Clifford said. “For us, on offense, we feed off that energy. The crowd gets back into it.”

RETURN TO FORM

Freiermuth, arguably Penn State’s most dangerous red zone target, finished with eight catches for 99 yards a week after he was knocked out of the game against Idaho with an apparent head injury.

Freiermuth, who led the team with eight touchdown catches last year, missed some practice time this week to heal up.

TOUGH INJURY

Buffalo punter Evan Finegan was carted off after suffering what appeared to be a serious right leg injury following a partially blocked punt in the third quarter. Reserve quarterback Kyle Vantrease handled punting duties the rest of the way.

THE TAKEAWAY

Buffalo: The daunting environment didn’t seem to bother the young Bulls. They controlled the pace in the first half, running 46 plays for 27 yards to Penn State’s 20 plays and 82 yards.

Penn State: The Nittany Lions’ strength is their defensive line and Buffalo’s offensive front did a good job neutralizing Yetur Gross-Matos and his teammates for most of the first half. In the meantime, Clifford and his receivers were able to create some chemistry.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Penn State cleaned up its mistakes at halftime, won going away and shouldn’t be penalized for its slow start.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
BUFF	0	10	3	0	13
PSU	7	0	28	10	45

Scoring Summary -----

	BUFF	PSU
FIRST QUARTER		
PSU TD 8:50 Jahan Dotson 28 Yd pass from Sean Clifford (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
2 plays, 37 yards, 0:30	0	7
SECOND QUARTER		
BUFF FG 9:42 Alex McNulty 32 Yd Field Goal		
19 plays, 69 yards, 8:34	3	7
BUFF TD 0:14 Julien Bourassa 6 Yd pass from Matt Myers (Alex McNulty Kick)		
10 plays, 96 yards, 4:29	10	7
THIRD QUARTER		
PSU TD 12:58 John Reid 36 Yd Interception Return (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
3 plays, 4 yards, 1:01	10	14
PSU TD 11:54 Pat Freiermuth 23 Yd pass from Sean Clifford (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
1 play, 23 yards, 0:05	10	21
BUFF FG 6:59 Alex McNulty 25 Yd Field Goal		
10 plays, 67 yards, 4:55	13	21
PSU TD 6:12 Noah Cain 2 Yd Run (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
3 plays, 65 yards, 0:43	13	28
PSU TD 2:56 Pat Freiermuth 28 Yd pass from Sean Clifford (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
5 plays, 55 yards, 1:35	13	35
FOURTH QUARTER		
PSU FG 13:58 Jake Pinegar 32 Yd Field Goal		
7 plays, 55 yards, 1:54	13	38
PSU TD 3:03 Jahan Dotson 56 Yd pass from Sean Clifford (Jake Pinegar Kick)		
4 plays, 74 yards, 1:51	13	45

Team Stats	BUFF	PSU
First Downs	22	14
Passes for First	9	9
Rushes for First	12	3
Penalties for First	1	2
Third Down Efficiency	10-23	2-9
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-2	1-1
Total Yards	429	357
Total Plays	90	46
Avg Gain Per Play	4.8	7.8
Net Yards Rushing	184	78
Rushes	58	24
Yards Per Rush	3.2	3.3
Net Yards Passing	245	279
Comp-Att	16-32	16-22
Yards Per Pass	7.7	12.7
Times Sacked	1	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-9	-11
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	6	5
Punt Average	31.3	41.2
Penalties	8	3
Penalty Yards	78	25
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Time of Poss	42:32	17:28

Individual Stats

RUSHING							
BUFFALO	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Jaret Patterson	23	71	3.1	0	14		
Kevin Marks	17	64	3.8	0	29		
Dylan McDuffie	6	43	7.2	0	20		
Ron Cook Jr.	5	6	1.2	0	4		
Matt Myers	7	0	0.0	0	3		
PENN ST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Sean Clifford	11	51	4.6	0	58		
Journey Brown	6	28	4.7	0	10		
Ricky Slade	3	8	2.7	0	6		
Noah Cain	1	2	2.0	1	2		
Jayson Oweh	1	1	1.0	0	1		
PASSING							
BUFFALO	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Matt Myers	16	31	245	7.9	1	1	42.7
Kyle Vantrease	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
PENN ST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Sean Clifford	16	22	279	12.7	4	0	87.3
RECEIVING							
BUFFALO	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Antonio Nunn	5	113	22.6	0	42		
Zac Lefebvre	2	33	16.5	0	29		
Carlton Todd	2	31	15.5	0	28		
Joey Banks	3	27	9.0	0	12		
Jaret Patterson	1	19	19.0	0	19		
Aapri Washington	1	11	11.0	0	11		
Julien Bourassa	1	6	6.0	1	6		
LeMaro Smith Jr.	1	5	5.0	0	5		
PENN ST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Jahan Dotson	4	109	27.3	2	56		
Pat Freiermuth	8	99	12.4	2	28		
KJ Hamler	3	62	20.7	0	45		
Cam Brown	1	9	9.0	0	9		