

FIESTA BOWL
LSU VS UCF

GLENDALE, Ariz. -- Joe Burrow watched the ball land in an opposing player's hands and immediately gave chase. Locked in on preventing a pick six, LSU's quarterback didn't see Joey Connors, Central Florida's 313-pound defensive lineman, bearing down on him.

With a thunderous, blindsided collision, Burrow found himself flat on his back, woozy and wondering what happened.

Minutes later, after being helped to his feet, Burrow was back on the field, hitting receivers all over the field.

The nation's longest winning streak was over. So was a second self-proclaimed national championship.

The LSU Tigers were Fiesta Bowl champions, thanks to their gritty junior quarterback.

Burrow shook off the big early hit to throw for 394 yards and four touchdowns, helping No. 11 LSU end No. 7 UCF's 25-game winning streak with a 40-32 victory in the Fiesta Bowl on Tuesday.

"I didn't really think about the hit too much after it happened," said Burrow, who had a cut on his neck from the hit. "It hurt for a second, I got right up and went on to the next play."

LSU (10-3, No. 11 CFP) started its first Fiesta Bowl without several key players on defense and fell into an early 11-point hole against the high-scoring Knights (12-1, No. 8 CFP).

The Tigers clawed back behind Burrow and a defensive front that made life difficult for UCF quarterback Darriell Mack Jr.

Burrow returned from the early blindsided hit to pick apart UCF's secondary, hitting 21 of 34 of passes, including two touchdowns to Justin Jefferson.

"It looked like the passing game we wanted," LSU coach Ed Orgeron said. "Joe was on the money."

LSU sacked Mack five times and made him rush numerous throws, holding the nation's third-best offense to 250 total yards -- 295 below its average -- while spoiling the Knights' bid for a second straight self-proclaimed national title.

Taj McGowan scored on a 2-yard run and the Knights converted a 2-point conversion to pull UCF to within 40-32. After LSU recovered the onside kick, the Knights' last-ditch attempt finished with a tipped interception, ending a run that started after a loss in the 2016 Cure Bowl.

"Obviously, everyone in the locker room is really upset," UCF defensive lineman Mason Colubiale. "We haven't lost a game since 2016."

UCF declared itself national champions after finishing as the only undefeated FBS team a year ago. The Knights earned another shot at an undefeated season by staging a massive rally to beat Memphis in the American Athletic Conference title game.

But just like last year, UCF was on the outside looking in when the College Football Playoff final four was announced, adding to the boulder-sized chip on its shoulder and only a self-awarded national title in its reach.

The Speedy Knights got the Fiesta Bowl off to a fast start, going up 14-3 on Greg McCrae's 25-yard TD run and Brandon Moore's 93-yard interception return.

The Tigers roared back behind Burrow and their disruptive defensive front.

Burrow shook off the big hit on the pick six, finding Jefferson on a pair of scoring passes and a 49-yard TD to Derrick Dillon.

UCF sputtered offensively after its opening drive, but Mack hit Gabriel Davis on a 32-yard pass in the closing seconds to pull UCF to within 24-21 at halftime.

Burrow opened the second half with a 32-yard TD pass to Ja'Marr Chase, and Cole Tracy hit three field goals to put LSU up 40-24. Tracy's final kick, the 97th of his career, broke the NCAA all-division record and ended the nation's fourth-longest winning streak since 2000.

"Love the way they competed for four quarters, continued to fight with everything that they had. Believed. Played as a group," UCF first-year coach Josh Hupel said. "Just weren't good enough at the end."

THE TAKEAWAY

Even depleted, LSU's defense proved to still be formidable and Burrow showed his grit after the big hit, giving LSU its first 10-win season since 2013.

UCF missed injured two-time AAC player of the year McKenzie Milton and had no answer for LSU's passing game to lose for the first time in two years.

SO MANY PENALTIES

The first meeting between UCF and LSU was chippy from the start, including three first-half ejections. LSU consensus All-America safety Grant Delpit was among those ejected after being called for targeting in the second quarter.

UCF had a key penalty in the second quarter, when Randy Charlton was hit with an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty after the Knights stopped LSU on a third-and-6. That kept the Tigers' drive alive and Burrow hit Justice for a TD that pulled LSU to within 14-10.

LSU had 14 penalties for 145 yards, LSU had 12 for 104 yards.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
LSU	10	14	6	40	32
UCF	14	7	3	8	32

Scoring Summary -----

Quarter	Time	Team	Player	Yards	Result
FIRST QUARTER	12:38	LSU	Greg McCrae	25	Field Goal
	10:56	UCF	Brandon Moore	93	Interception Return
	6:39	UCF	Derrick Dillon	49	Field Goal
	1:27	LSU	Justin Jefferson	22	Pass
	0:04	UCF	Gabriel Davis	32	Field Goal
SECOND QUARTER	12:59	LSU	Ja'Marr Chase	32	Field Goal
	7:11	LSU	Justin Jefferson	33	Pass
	0:04	UCF	Gabriel Davis	32	Field Goal
	0:01	UCF	Matthew Wright	37	Field Goal
	0:55	LSU	Cole Tracy	28	Field Goal
THIRD QUARTER	12:38	LSU	Ja'Marr Chase	32	Field Goal
	7:11	LSU	Justin Jefferson	33	Pass
	0:04	UCF	Gabriel Davis	32	Field Goal
	0:01	UCF	Matthew Wright	37	Field Goal
	0:55	LSU	Cole Tracy	28	Field Goal
FOURTH QUARTER	12:09	LSU	Cole Tracy	28	Field Goal
	4:12	LSU	Cole Tracy	26	Field Goal
	2:24	UCF	Taj McGowan	2	Run
	1:48	UCF	Taj McGowan	2	Run
	0:00	UCF	OTIS ANDERSON	2	Run

Team Stats	LSU	USF
First Downs	32	17
Total Yards	555	250
Total Plays	86	61
Avg Gain Per Play	6.5	4.1
Net Yards Rushing	161	130
Rushes	52	30
Yards Per Rush	3.1	4.3
Net Yards Passing	394	120
Comp-Att	21-34	12-31
Yards Per Pass	11.6	3.9
Times Sacked	2	5
Yds Lost To Sacks	-9	-48
Interceptions	1	1
Punts	3	6
Punt Average	36.0	49.5
Penalties	14	12
Penalty Yards	145	104
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Possession	44:31	15:29

Individual Stats

RUSHING						
Player	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD	
LSU						
4 Nick Brossette	29	117	4.0	24	0	
22 Clyde Edwards-Helaire	10	32	3.2	15	0	
9 Joe Burrow	9	24	2.7	11	0	
2 Justin Jefferson	1	-5	-5.0	0	0	
UCF						
30 Greg McCrae	10	81	8.1	25	1	
2 Otis Anderson	3	23	7.7	12	0	
9 Adrian Killins Jr.	3	17	5.7	9	0	
4 Taj McGowan	2	6	3.0	4	1	
17 Marlon Williams	1	6	6.0	6	0	
8 Darriell Mack Jr.	11	-3	-0.3	20	0	
PASSING						
Player	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int
LSU						
9 Joe Burrow	21	34	394	11.6	4	1
UCF						
8 Darriell Mack Jr.	11	30	97	3.2	1	1
17 Marlon Williams	1	1	23	23.0	0	0

RECEIVING

Player	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
LSU					
1 Ja'Marr Chase	6	93	15.5	32	1
2 Justin Jefferson	4	87	21.8	33	2
19 Derrick Dillon	2	86	43.0	49	1
10 Stephen Sullivan	3	76	25.3	42	0
22 Clyde Edwards-Helaire	3	25	8.3	11	0
18 Foster Moreau	2	22	11.0	16	0
4 Nick Brossette	1	5	5.0	5	0
UCF					
13 Gabriel Davis	3	59	19.7	32	1
5 Dredrick Snelson	2	24	12.0	17	0
8 Darriell Mack Jr.	1	23	23.0	23	0
86 Michael Colubiale	3	20	6.7	16	0
30 Greg McCrae	1	2	2.0	2	0
9 Adrian Killins Jr.	2	-8	-4.0	0	0