

WEEK ONE  
NORTH CAROLINA AT CALIFORNIA

BERKELEY, Calif. -- Rotating three quarterbacks had mixed results for California in its season-opening win over North Carolina.

The Golden Bears defense that forced four interceptions and only allowed a field goal through three quarters more than made up for it.

Patrick Laird rushed for one touchdown and caught another, Cal's defense took advantage of a rocky outing from North Carolina quarterback Nathan Elliott, and the Bears held off the Tar Heels 24-17 on Saturday.

"This was a defensive win today," Laird said. "The defense held steady. I love seeing that, especially because our offense has a lot of things that we need to do better."

Cameron Goode had one of four interceptions for Cal and scored on a 38-yard return before leaving in the fourth quarter with a possible leg injury. Cornerback Jaylinn Hawkins had two picks.

"It's really hard to lose a game when you force four turnovers and don't give up any," Cal linebacker Evan Weaver said. "The secondary, they like to talk a lot. When they back it up, it's awesome."

Cal's defense came up big on a day when the Bears rotated three quarterbacks all afternoon -- often during the same series -- and were limited to 119 passing yards.

Ross Bowers started for the Bears but was in and out of the game. Chase Garbers threw for one touchdown while Brandon McIlwain also split time running the offense.

"When you add some of the things that Chase does and Brandon (does) in terms of running the ball, it just adds another dimension and can get people in more one-on-one situations," Cal coach Justin Wilcox said. "That was the reason for it. Nothing Ross did wrong. We knew that all the guys would play in the game going in."

Laird plodded his way to 95 yards on 29 carries. He had a 3-yard touchdown run in the first quarter and caught a 4-yard touchdown pass from Garbers in the third.

Antonio Williams scored on a 3-yard run for North Carolina. Anthony Ratliff-Williams added a 14-yard touchdown catch.

"Turnovers and penalties, that's the game right there," Tar Heels coach Larry Fedora said. "Self-inflicted wounds is what those are."

The Tar Heels trailed 24-3 before scoring a pair of touchdowns in the fourth quarter.

After Elliott's 14-yard touchdown to Ratliff-Williams with 1:13 remaining cut the lead to 24-17, North Carolina appeared to recover an onside kick but the Tar Heels were called for an illegal block. Cal recovered the next try.

Elliott, who started the final three games in 2017, completed 15 of 35 passes for 144 yards and one touchdown but couldn't overcome the turnovers.

"Whether you get pressure or not you have to make the right decision," Fedora said. "If you turn it over like we did you're going to have a hard time winning the game."

RATLIFF-WILLIAMS: GOOD, BAD AND DROPS

Ratliff-Williams' sparkling touchdown catch capped an up-and-down day for the Tar Heels receiver. Matched against California cornerback Camryn Bynum most of the day, Ratliff-Williams was held to one catch in the first half, dropped a touchdown pass in the third and was called for a holding in the fourth. "Nate threw some great passes to give those guys an opportunity to make a play, and usually Ant's going to make those plays," Fedora said. "Today he didn't make all those."

IN THE QB'S HEAD

Cal outside linebacker Alex Funches, who earlier in the week talked about the mental game he tries to play with opposing quarterbacks, forced Elliott into several hurried throws including one that was intercepted by Hawkins. Funches repeatedly disrupted plays in the backfield

THE TAKEAWAY

North Carolina: The Tar Heels showed some fight late but have a lot of work to do offensively. Elliott struggled all afternoon and had multiple communication issues with his receivers. Defensive end Malik Carney lost his cool early but came back and was Carolina's most effective player the rest of the way.

California: Looked crisp defensively across the board, especially in the secondary, but will get a better litmus test next week against BYU. The passing game sputtered quite a bit, which could be expected when shuffling quarterbacks in and out.

| Final | 1 | 2  | 3 | 4  | T  |
|-------|---|----|---|----|----|
| UNC   | 0 | 0  | 3 | 14 | 17 |
| CAL   | 7 | 10 | 7 | 0  | 24 |

Scoring Summary -----

|  | UNC | CAL |
|--|-----|-----|
| <b>FIRST QUARTER</b>   |     |     |
| CAL TD 2:40  |     |     |
| Patrick Laird 3 Yd Run (Greg Thomas Kick)                                    |     |     |
| 4 plays, 23 yards, 1:35  | 0   | 7   |
| <b>SECOND QUARTER</b>  |     |     |
| CAL TD 13:51   |     |     |
| Cameron Goode 38 Yd Interception Return (Greg Thomas Kick)                   |     |     |
| 3 plays, 3 yards, 0:00   | 0   | 14  |
| CAL FG 6:43  |     |     |
| Greg Thomas 35 Yd Field Goal   |     |     |
| 11 plays, 49 yards, 5:08   | 0   | 17  |
| <b>THIRD QUARTER</b>   |     |     |
| UNC FG 4:39  |     |     |
| Freeman Jones 43 Yd Field Goal   |     |     |
| 5 plays, 44 yards, 1:16  | 3   | 17  |
| CAL TD 0:22  |     |     |
| Patrick Laird 4 Yd pass from Chase Garbers (Greg Thomas Kick)                |     |     |
| 10 plays, 79 yards, 4:09   | 3   | 24  |
| <b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>  |     |     |
| UNC TD 6:31  |     |     |
| Antonio Williams 3 Yd Run (Freeman Jones Kick)                               |     |     |
| 19 plays, 92 yards, 6:04   | 10  | 24  |
| UNC TD 1:13  |     |     |
| Anthony Ratliff-Williams 14 Yd pass from Nathan Elliott (Freeman Jones Kick) |     |     |
| 14 plays, 0 yards, 1:08  | 17  | 24  |

| Team Stats        | UNC   | CAL   |
|-------------------|-------|-------|
| First Downs       | 16    | 19    |
| Total Yards       | 301   | 279   |
| Total Plays       | 73    | 81    |
| Avg Gain Per Play | 4.1   | 3.4   |
| Net Yards Rushing | 164   | 160   |
| Rushes            | 38    | 49    |
| Yards Per Rush    | 4.3   | 3.3   |
| Net Yards Passing | 137   | 119   |
| Comp-Att          | 15-35 | 16-32 |
| Yards Per Pass    | 3.9   | 3.7   |
| Times Sacked      | 4     | 0     |
| Yds Lost To Sacks | 23    | 0     |
| Interceptions     | 0     | 4     |
| Punts             | 7     | 8     |
| Punt Average      | 42.1  | 33.6  |
| Penalties         | 13    | 5     |
| Penalty Yards     | 124   | 35    |
| Fumbles           | 0     | 0     |
| Fumbles Lost      | 0     | 0     |
| Possession        | 21:22 | 38:38 |

Individual Stats

RUSHING

| UNC                      | Rush | Yds | Avg | TD | Long |
|--------------------------|------|-----|-----|----|------|
| Nathan Elliott           | 10   | 58  | 5.8 | 0  | 12   |
| Antonio Williams         | 17   | 47  | 2.8 | 1  | 8    |
| Jordan Brown             | 6    | 35  | 5.8 | 0  | 21   |
| Dazz Newsome             | 2    | 9   | 4.5 | 0  | 7    |
| Javonte Williams         | 2    | 9   | 4.5 | 0  | 6    |
| Anthony Ratliff-Williams | 1    | 6   | 6.0 | 0  | 6    |

| CAL              | Rush | Yds | Avg  | TD | Long |
|------------------|------|-----|------|----|------|
| Patrick Laird    | 29   | 95  | 3.3  | 1  | 19   |
| Chase Garbers    | 10   | 39  | 3.9  | 0  | 17   |
| Brandon McIlwain | 3    | 26  | 8.7  | 0  | 17   |
| Vic Wharton III  | 1    | 8   | 8.0  | 0  | 8    |
| Derrick Clark    | 1    | 1   | 1.0  | 0  | 1    |
| Team             | 2    | -2  | -1.0 | 0  | 0    |
| Ross Bowers      | 3    | -7  | -2.3 | 0  | 6    |

PASSING

| UNC            | Comp | Att | Yds | Y/A | TD | Int | QBRat |
|----------------|------|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-------|
| Nathan Elliott | 15   | 35  | 137 | 3.9 | 1  | 4   | 7.8   |

| CAL              | Comp | Att | Yds | Y/A | TD | Int | QBRat |
|------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|-------|
| Ross Bowers      | 8    | 17  | 56  | 3.3 | 0  | 0   | 12.4  |
| Chase Garbers    | 7    | 13  | 54  | 4.2 | 1  | 0   | 44.5  |
| Brandon McIlwain | 1    | 2   | 9   | 4.5 | 0  | 0   | 28.9  |

RECEIVING

| UNC                      | Rec | Yds | Avg  | TD | Long |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|------|----|------|
| Anthony Ratliff-Williams | 3   | 62  | 20.7 | 1  | 44   |
| Javonte Williams         | 3   | 26  | 8.7  | 0  | 14   |
| Jordan Brown             | 3   | 19  | 6.3  | 0  | 9    |
| Rontavious Groves        | 1   | 14  | 14.0 | 0  | 14   |
| Dazz Newsome             | 2   | 9   | 4.5  | 0  | 8    |
| Roscoe Johnson           | 1   | 7   | 7.0  | 0  | 7    |
| Antonio Williams         | 2   | 0   | 0.0  | 0  | 0    |

| CAL              | Rec | Yds | Avg  | TD | Long |
|------------------|-----|-----|------|----|------|
| Jordan Duncan    | 3   | 34  | 11.3 | 0  | 19   |
| Maurice Ways     | 1   | 23  | 23.0 | 0  | 23   |
| Vic Wharton III  | 3   | 18  | 6.0  | 0  | 10   |
| Kanawai Noa      | 3   | 15  | 5.0  | 0  | 7    |
| Patrick Laird    | 4   | 14  | 3.5  | 1  | 8    |
| Jeremiah Hawkins | 1   | 9   | 9.0  | 0  | 9    |
| Malik McMorris   | 1   | 6   | 6.0  | 0  | 6    |