

WEEK 1  
Texas State at Rutgers

Rutgers rolls past Texas State 35-7

PISCATAWAY, N.J. -- After season-opening losses the past two seasons against ranked Washington, Rutgers' third-year coach Chris Ash started with a win for the first time in his tenure. "It's been three years to get there," Ash said. "But opening the season 1-0 is great."

Raheem Blackshear and Jonathan Hilliman had two touchdowns apiece to lead Rutgers past Texas State 35-7 on Saturday in a season opener.

Hilliman did almost all his damage on the ground with 60 yards on 15 carries and Blackshear, a fellow running back, led Rutgers in catches with seven for 56 yards and a touchdown to go along with 62 rushing yards and a score. "He's going to pretty much be a swiss army knife for us" Hilliman said. "He can do everything."

Freshman quarterback Art Sitkowski had an up-and-down day for Rutgers, going 20 for 29 for 205 yards with a touchdown and three interceptions. The second was a pick-6 by Kordell Rodgers, returning it 51 yards to make it 21-7 midway through the third quarter.

Right before halftime with a 21-0 lead, Sitkowski threw a red zone interception -- his first of the day -- after leading his team down the field from its 1-yard line.

"You throw a pick, get over it," Sitkowski said. "It's football. It's bound to happen. ... Next one mentality. Let's go out there and put one in the end zone, so I learned to forget what happens. Learn from it and go out to the next drive."

Texas State was led by sophomore quarterback Will Jones III, who was making his first collegiate start. He went 6 of 19 for 79 yards and an interception while also rushing for 33 yards on 14 carries before being replaced by freshman Tyler Vitt in the fourth quarter.

"We did not play well defensively, offensively or the kicking game," Texas State coach Everett Withers said. "Defensively you cannot give up 218 yards in the run game at about 5 yards per clip. You cannot be 8 for 13 on third downs, you cannot do that and win games."

**INJURY UPDATE**

After an interception in the second quarter, Rutgers cornerback Bless Austin went out and did not return. Ash said Austin was held out as a precaution and there was nothing long-term to worry about. ... Tijaun Mason suffered a leg injury that will keep him out as Ash said he likely has a fracture.

**BIG WIN, BIG GAME AHEAD**

It was the largest margin of victory for Rutgers since defeating No. 23 South Florida 31-0 in 2009.

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Texas State: After a 2-10 campaign in 2017-18, the Bobcats weren't expected come to Piscataway and steal a victory over a Power 5 conference team. However, the experience against a higher-caliber opponent could serve Texas State well going forward.

Rutgers: The Scarlet Knights did what a Big Ten team should do against the Sun Belt. The season-opener was never going to be a good barometer for the upcoming year. Still, it's good to start the season with a win before traveling to No. 5 Ohio State and Kansas on back-to-back weeks.

<b>Final</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>TXST</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>RUTG</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35</b>

**Scoring Summary -----**

<b>first Quarter</b>	<b>TXST</b>	<b>RUTG</b>
RUTG TD 9:41 Raheem Blackshear 9 Yd Run (Justin Davidovicz Kick)	0	7
11 plays, 71 yards, 5:19	0	7
<b>second Quarter</b>	<b>TXST</b>	<b>RUTG</b>
RUTG TD 12:41 Jonathan Hilliman 3 Yd Run (Justin Davidovicz Kick)	0	14
8 plays, 54 yards, 3:59	0	14
RUTG TD 7:27 Raheem Blackshear 9 Yd pass from Artur Sitkowski (Justin Davidovicz Kick) 2 plays, 3 yards, 0:00	0	21t
<b>third Quarter</b>	<b>TXST</b>	<b>RUTG</b>
TXST TD 7:17 Kordell Rodgers 51 Yd Interception Return (Chris Kessler Kick) 4 plays, 22 yards, 1:36	7	21
RUTG TD 1:23 Jonathan Hilliman 8 Yd Run (Justin Davidovicz Kick)	7	28
13 plays, 75 yards, 5:47	7	28
<b>fourth Quarter</b>	<b>TXST</b>	<b>RUTG</b>
RUTG TD 9:17 Olakunle Fatukasi 0 Yd Fumble Return (Justin Davidovicz Kick) 2 plays, -3 yards, 0:00	7	35

<b>Team Stats</b>	<b>TXST</b>	<b>RUTG</b>
First Downs	11	23
Total Yards	169	423
Total Plays	55	75
Avg Gain Per Play	123	237
Net Yards Rushing	69	218
Rushes	31	46
Yards Per Rush	2.2	4.7
Net Yards Passing	100	205
Comp-Att	9-24	20-29
Yards Per Pass	4.2	7.1
Times Sacked	1-11	3-30
Interceptions	3-51-1	1-8-0
Punts	1--1-0	2--3-0
Punt Average	-1.0	-1.5
Penalty Yards	15-119	7-50
Fumbles Lost	2-2	1-1
<b>Poss. Time</b>	<b>24:28</b>	<b>35:32</b>

**Individual Stats**

**RUSHING**

<b>Texas St.</b>	<b>Rush</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>Long</b>	<b>TD</b>
Willie Jones III	14	33	2.4	22	0
Anthony D. Taylor	7	32	4.6	10	0
Caleb Twyford	5	9	1.8	8	0
Tyler Vitt	1	3	3.0	3	0
Tyler Watts	1	3	3.0	3	0
Jaylin Nelson	1	0	0.0	0	0
Jah'Marae Sheread	1	-4	-4.0	0	0
<b>Rutgers</b>	<b>Rush</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>Long</b>	<b>TD</b>
Isaih Pacheco	11	76	6.9	28	0
Raheem Blackshear	12	62	5.2	11	1
Jonathan Hilliman	15	60	4.0	15	2
Charles Snorweah	4	21	5.3	9	0
Shameen Jones	1	6	6.0	6	0
Trey Sneed	1	2	2.0	2	0
Artur Sitkowski	2	-9	-4.5	2	0

**PASSING**

<b>Texas St.</b>	<b>Comp</b>	<b>Att</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Y/A</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Int</b>	<b>QBRat</b>
Willie Jones III	6	19	31.6	79	4.2	0	1	56.0 11
Tyler Vitt	3	5	60.0	21	4.2	0	0	95.3
<b>rutgers</b>	<b>Comp</b>	<b>Att</b>	<b>Pct</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Y/A</b>	<b>TD</b>	<b>Int</b>	<b>QBRat</b>
Artur Sitkowski	20	29	69.0	205	7.1	1	3	119.0

**RECEIVING**

<b>Receiving</b>	<b>Rec</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>Long</b>	<b>TD</b>
Jah'Marae Sheread	1	37	37.0	37	0
Caleb Twyford	3	21	7.0	23	0
Anthony D. Taylor	1	16	16.0	16	0
Keenen Brown	1	12	12.0	12	0
Mason Hays	1	6	6.0	6	0
Hutch White	1	5	5.0	5	0
Javen Banks	1	3	3.0	3	0
Tyler Watts	0	0	-	-	0
<b>Rutgers</b>	<b>Rec</b>	<b>Yds</b>	<b>Avg</b>	<b>Long</b>	<b>TD</b>
Bo Melton	4	57	14.3	24	0
Raheem Blackshear	7	56	8.0	17	1
Jerome Washington	2	32	16.0	29	0
Daevon Robinson	2	24	12.0	15	0
Shameen Jones	1	12	12.0	12	0
Hunter Hayek	1	10	10.0	10	0
Eddie Lewis	2	10	5.0	8	0
23 Jonathan Hilliman	1	4	4.0	4	0