

**WEEK FOUR
RICE AT WAKE FOREST**

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. -- The last few weeks were trying times for Wake Forest's defense. They allowed 41 points in a loss to Boston College. They yielded 56 in another defeat at the hands of Notre Dame. They watched their coordinator lose his job.

On Saturday, players and coaches alike said they got back to having fun. It showed. The Demon Deacons scored two defensive touchdowns for the first time since 2008 and cruised to a 56-24 win over Rice.

"To me, it looked like they were having fun," Wake Forest coach Dave Clawson said. "They were playing with emotion. They were flying around. The blitzes looked faster. There was just an energy level out there, and I think they got some confidence from the first few drives."

The Demon Deacons (3-2) punted on their opening drive, but that was their lone blemish in what was otherwise a nearly perfect start. Excluding a kneel-down to conclude the second quarter, the offense scored touchdowns on six of its subsequent seven possessions.

And then there was the defense, which had performed poorly enough in the first few weeks of the season that Clawson saw fit to fire coordinator Jay Sawvel in the wake of the team's 56-27 loss to No. 8 Notre Dame. Against the Owls, Wake Forest forced three turnovers, returning two for scores and setting up a short field for another touchdown on the third.

"That's a unit that, for the eight quarters before that, had it handed to them pretty good. I thought it was really important that they start fast today," Clawson said.

But the performance was more than just a series of big plays. By the time Rice earned its initial first down of the game, the Owls were already behind 21-0.

"I think we handled it really well," safety Luke Masterson said of the coaching change, which notably did not include Clawson promoting anyone to the role of defensive coordinator. "We had three really good days of practice. We had no distractions. We just put our heads down and worked, and it showed in the first half, for sure."

Indeed, by halftime, Wake Forest had built a 42-3 lead. The only questions remaining were the final margin of victory and how many times Greg Dortch would score.

The sophomore receiver finished with 11 receptions for 163 yards and four touchdowns. His 54-yard catch, the longest reception of his career, opened the scoring. He tied his own school record for touchdown receptions in a single game, set last October in a win over Louisville.

"Greg's a really good football player, and we make every effort we can to get him the football," Clawson said. "Today, we were able to do that."

"What people don't realize is there are times when people double Greg, and sometimes that allows us to run the ball for 240 yards, because you're taking that linebacker or safety out of the run game, and that's the reason we can run the ball better. A lot of our offense is driven through the slot position, which Greg plays, and he had a heck of a game today."

Rice (1-4) was led by running back Austin Walter, who accounted for 198 total yards and two touchdowns. But those scores came after halftime, when the outcome had already long been decided.

"It was not part of our plan for the scoreboard to look like this coming into the game," Rice's first-year coach Mike Bloomgren said. "But if you don't execute in a road game against an ACC team with talent on their sideline, it is tough."

THE TAKEAWAY

Wake Forest: While Clawson was quick to note that Rice and Notre Dame were not comparable opposition, there was at least some optimism that Saturday's defensive performance could be the start of the improvement needed to compete against the ACC's top teams.

"I just liked the way that, when we gave up plays, it was a physical mistake and not a mental mistake," Clawson said. "If we missed a tackle, we missed a tackle. If we didn't cover, we didn't cover. It wasn't because we weren't in the right coverage or the right alignment. There were a lot less of those mistakes."

Rice: The Owls' early struggles under Bloomgren continued. While Rice eked out a 31-28 win over FCS foe Prairie View A&M in its season-opener, it has followed that up with four consecutive losses, each by at least 14 points.

HIGH-SCORING AFFAIR

Wake Forest's 56 points were a BB&T Field record, surpassing the program's prior record output of 54 points against Duke in 2011. At one point in the third quarter, the teams combined to score three touchdowns in a span of 1:03. While there were few positives for Rice, Walter's 165 rushing yards were a career-high.

	1	2	3	4	T
RICE	0	3	14	7	24
WAKE	21	21	14	0	56

Scoring Summary -----

	RICE	WAKE
FIRST QUARTER		
WAKE TD 10:37		
Greg Dortch 54 Yd pass from Sam Hartman (Nick Sciba Kick)		7
3 plays, 64 yards, 0:41	0	
WAKE TD 6:58		
Cade Carney 1 Yd Run (Nick Sciba Kick)		14
7 plays, 55 yards, 2:03	0	
WAKE TD 3:30		
Greg Dortch 10 Yd pass from Sam Hartman (Nick Sciba Kick)		21
7 plays, 61 yards, 2:24	0	
SECOND QUARTER	RICE	WAKE
WAKE TD 13:33		
Cade Carney 1 Yd Run (Nick Sciba Kick)		28
7 plays, 18 yards, 1:40	0	
RICE FG 10:17		
Jack Fox 39 Yd Field Goal		28
8 plays, 39 yards, 3:16	3	
WAKE TD 8:10		
Greg Dortch 38 Yd pass from Sam Hartman (Nick Sciba Kick)		35
7 plays, 76 yards, 2:07	3	
WAKE TD 5:25		
Essang Bassey 51 Yd Fumble Return (Nick Sciba Kick)		42
5 plays, 26 yards, 2:45	3	
THIRD QUARTER	RICE	WAKE
RICE TD 10:08		
Austin Walter 8 Yd pass from Shawn Stankavage (Jack Fox Kick)		42
3 plays, 72 yards, 1:23	10	
WAKE TD 8:58		
Greg Dortch 4 Yd pass from Sam Hartman (Nick Sciba Kick)		49
4 plays, 75 yards, 1:10	10	
WAKE TD 8:13		
Chuck Wade Jr. 60 Yd Interception Return (Zach Murphy Kick)		56
2 plays, 30 yards, 0:45	10	
RICE TD 7:55		
Austin Walter 38 Yd Run (Jack Fox Kick)		56
1 play, 38 yards, 0:18	17	
FOURTH QUARTER	RICE	WAKE
RICE TD 14:50		
Aaron Cephus 3 Yd pass from Shawn Stankavage (Jack Fox Kick)		56
13 plays, 62 yards, 5:38	24	

Team Stats	RICE	WAKE
First Downs	19	20
Total Yards	370	414
Total Plays	76	61
Avg Gain Per Play	4.9	6.8
Net Yards Rushing	267	171
Rushes	44	41
Yards Per Rush	6.1	4.2
Net Yards Passing	103	243
Comp-Att	17-32	17-20
Yards Per Pass	3.2	12.2
Times Sacked	0	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	0	-5
Interceptions	2	1
Punts	6	4
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	6	3
Penalty Yards	55	25
Fumbles	1	1
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Possession	37:12	22:48

Individual Stats

RUSHING						
	RICE	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Austin Walter	18	165	9.2	1	47	
Giovanni Gentosi	3	31	10.3	0	19	
Aston Walter	6	25	4.2	0	10	
Shawn Stankavage	3	21	7.0	0	11	
Emmanuel Esukpa	11	20	1.8	0	7	
Nahshon Ellerbe	3	5	1.7	0	4	
WAKE						
	RICE	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Christian Beal-Smith	9	60	6.7	0	19	
Cade Carney	13	49	3.8	2	10	
Matt Colburn	8	34	4.3	0	8	
Kendall Hinton	6	23	3.8	0	9	
Sam Hartman	2	4	2.0	0	9	
Will Drawdy	3	1	0.3	0	2	

PASSING								
	RICE	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Shawn Stankavage	17	32	103	3.2	2	2	18.4	
WAKE								
	RICE	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Sam Hartman	15	17	241	14.2	4	0	98.8	
Kendall Hinton	2	3	2	0.7	0	1	1.5	

RECEIVING						
	RICE	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Austin Walter	5	32	6.4	1	9	
Austin Trammell	4	29	7.3	0	17	
Aaron Cephus	4	27	6.8	1	11	
Brendan Harmon	2	11	5.5	0	6	
Rhett Cardwell	1	2	2.0	0	2	
Jaeger Bull	1	2	2.0	0	2	
WAKE						
	RICE	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Greg Dortch	11	163	14.8	4	54	
Jack Freudenthal	2	53	26.5	0	42	
Sage Surratt	1	17	17.0	0	17	
Brandon Chapman	1	8	8.0	0	8	
Jaquarii Roberson	2	2	1.0	0	2	