

WEEK FOUR
SYRACUSE AT CLEMSON

CLEMSON, S.C. -- Should No. 3 Clemson fulfill its championship aspirations this season, prepare to hear plenty about "The Drive."

With new starting quarterback Trevor Lawrence knocked out of the game, reserve Chase Brice -- who was about sixth on the depth chart last January -- guided a 94-yard, fourth-quarter scoring drive that ended with Travis Etienne's 2-yard touchdown run with 41 seconds and gave the Tigers a 27-23 victory against Syracuse on Saturday.

"I'll never forget this one," Clemson coach Dabo Swinney said. "Some might say it's the fifth game of the year, but it's more than that. I saw a team that didn't quit."

This one was hard to forget, both for the week Clemson (5-0, 2-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) endured in going from having one too many starting-caliber QBs to having none by the fourth quarter to the game's dramatic finish.

Lawrence, a 6-foot-6 five-star freshman, supplanted senior Kelly Bryant as starter. A day later, Bryant said he was transferring and that he felt he did not get a fair shake at keeping the job.

Then in the second quarter, a shaky Lawrence took hard hit to the head, wobbled to the sidelines and did not return.

Things looked bleak for the Tigers when Eric Dungey's second 1-yard rushing TD put Syracuse up 23-13 with less than 13 minutes left. That's when Clemson put together a pair of touchdown drives to stay unbeaten and avoid a second straight season of being upset by Syracuse.

Etienne answered Dungey's score less than two minutes later with a 26-yard run that cut it to 23-20.

Five minutes later, Clemson embarked on what might turn out to be the season's defining drive.

"I think I'll remember that forever," co-offensive coordinator Jeff Scott said.

That was apparent. Brice, a redshirt freshman with eight career passes before Saturday, completed a 20-yard pass to Tee Higgins on fourth-and-6 to keep the drive going. Brice ran for 17 yards to get the Tigers inside the 20. And Etienne carried it across the goal line to send Memorial Stadium into a frenzy.

"They told us someone had to step up," said Etienne, a sophomore who had a career high 203 yards and three TDs. "We all decided it had to be us."

Dungey was sacked twice by freshman Xavier Thomas on Syracuse's final drive. The Orange (4-1, 1-1) were trying for their first 5-0 start since 1987. Dungey finished with two rushing touchdowns. He was 26 of 41 passing for 250 yards and an interception.

The win capped an odd week for the Tigers, who lost a popular, charismatic leader -- and potential safety net in Lawrence's absence -- in Bryant. And now Lawrence's status is up in the air. The crowd went silent as Lawrence lay on the turf after getting hit hard to the head in the second quarter.

Swinney said Bryant would be welcome back to the team if he changed his mind. A new NCAA rule allows players to participate in four games and still take a redshirt season. Bryant's plan is to red-shirt this season and transfer to another school, where he would be eligible to play immediately next season because he has already graduated.

Lawrence, the former five-star recruit, was so-so in his starting debut. Lawrence fumbled on his second snap and 10 of 15 for 93 yards. Brice entered right before halftime and finished with 83 yards passing.

Clemson right guard Sean Pollard, a junior, said the team was disappointed by Bryant's departure. But Swinney and the coaches kept players informed about everything. Whispers of a divided locker room were nonsense, Pollard said. "People just don't know anything about us if they thought that," he said.

Lawrence has concussion-like symptoms, Swinney said. He wanted to return, but the coach told him, "You don't mess with that."

THE TAKEAWAY

Syracuse: The Orange had chances to put this one away and make it two straight victories against Clemson, but could not overcome the Tigers' talented defense in the second half.

Clemson: The Tigers would surely love a bye week so Lawrence could heal and the players could have some to absorb their chaotic week. This victory should help galvanize the team as it goes for a fourth straight ACC crown.

DISAPPOINTED ORANGE

Dungey said the team was upset about its loss, but eager to return to work and show there's substance behind their 4-0 start. "We're not going to let this one get to us, although it hurts right now," he said.

MISSING TIGERS

Clemson announced shortly before kickoff two reserves in cornerback Mark Fields and receiver Cornell Powell would not play.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
SYR	6	10	0	7	23
CLEM	7	0	6	14	27

Scoring Summary -----

	SYR	CLEM
FIRST QUARTER		
SYR FG 9:49		
Andre Szmyt 35 Yd Field Goal	3	0
11 plays, 58 yards, 5:11		
SYR FG 8:26		
Andre Szmyt 51 Yd Field Goal	6	0
4 plays, -3 yards, 0:47		
CLEM TD 0:54		
Travis Etienne 1 Yd Run (Greg Huegel Kick)		7
10 plays, 60 yards, 4:11	6	7
SECOND QUARTER		
SYR TD 7:31		
Eric Dungey 1 Yd Run (Andre Szmyt Kick)	13	7
6 plays, 70 yards, 2:39		
SYR FG 0:24		
Andre Szmyt 32 Yd Field Goal	16	7
13 plays, 75 yards, 4:16		
THIRD QUARTER		
CLEM FG 4:09		
Greg Huegel 43 Yd Field Goal	16	10
8 plays, 55 yards, 2:46		
CLEM FG 2:13		
Greg Huegel 37 Yd Field Goal	16	13
4 plays, 5 yards, 1:15		
FOURTH QUARTER		
SYR TD 12:58		
Eric Dungey 1 Yd Run (Andre Szmyt Kick)	23	13
4 plays, 10 yards, 2:02		
CLEM TD 11:08		
Travis Etienne 26 Yd Run (Greg Huegel Kick)	23	20
6 plays, 75 yards, 1:50		
CLEM TD 0:41		
Travis Etienne 2 Yd Run (Greg Huegel Kick)	23	27
13 plays, 94 yards, 5:25		

Team Stats	SYR	CLEM
First Downs	12	28
Total Yards	311	469
Total Plays	67	82
Avg Gain Per Play	4.6	5.7
Net Yards Rushing	61	293
Rushes	26	53
Yards Per Rush	2.3	5.5
Net Yards Passing	250	176
Comp-Att	26-41	17-29
Yards Per Pass	6.1	6.1
Times Sacked	1	4
Yds Lost To Sacks	-8	-30
Interceptions	1	1
Punts	7	4
Punt Average	48.6	40.3
Penalties	5	3
Penalty Yards	31	16
Fumbles	0	3
Fumbles Lost	0	2
Possession	27:09	32:51

Individual Stats

RUSHING

SYR	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Sean Riley	2	24	12.0	0	19
Moe Neal	7	21	3.0	0	6
Eric Dungey	13	11	0.8	2	9
Jarveon Howard	1	3	3.0	0	3
Dontae Strickland	3	2	0.7	0	1

CLEM	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Travis Etienne	27	203	7.5	3	26
Adam Choice	9	58	6.4	0	20
Tavien Feaster	9	44	4.9	0	11
Team	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
Chase Brice	3	-2	-0.7	0	17
Trevor Lawrence	4	-9	-2.3	0	7

PASSING

SYR	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Eric Dungey	26	41	250	6.1	0	1	34.4
CLEM	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Trevor Lawrence	10	15	93	6.2	0	0	25.9
Chase Brice	7	13	83	6.4	0	1	33.9
Amari Rodgers	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0.1

RECEIVING

SYR	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Jamal Custis	5	73	14.6	0	31
Taj Harris	3	66	22.0	0	51
Devin C. Butler	5	45	9.0	0	17
Moe Neal	5	26	5.2	0	18
Nykeim Johnson	2	17	8.5	0	12
Sean Riley	4	16	4.0	0	9
Dontae Strickland	2	7	3.5	0	6

CLEM	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Tee Higgins	4	53	13.3	0	20
Hunter Renfrow	3	45	15.0	0	28
Justyn Ross	3	40	13.3	0	16
Amari Rodgers	4	27	6.8	0	11
Tavien Feaster	1	8	8.0	0	8
T.J. Chase	1	6	6.0	0	6
Travis Etienne	1	-3	-3.0	0	0