

WEEK FOUR  
**TENNESSEE STATE AT VANDERBILT**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- The final buzzer sounded at Vanderbilt Stadium and two teams separated by four points and less than three miles came together.

The FCS Tennessee State Tigers put a scare into the SEC's Vanderbilt Commodores who eked out a 31-27 win behind Kyle Shurmur 297-yard, three-touchdown performance; but in the postgame, the visitors weren't lamenting their missed opportunities and the home team was relieved by its close call.

The teams united in prayer at midfield, their coaches -- TSU's Rod Reed and Vanderbilt's Derek Mason who are close friends -- embraced. Late in the first half, TSU linebacker Christian Abercrombie was taken off the field by stretcher and moved to the Vanderbilt University Medical Center's emergency room after collapsing with a head injury that Reed later confirmed required surgery.

"Football is what we do, not who we are," Mason said after the game. "At the end of the day when serious injuries happen, football becomes secondary."

The Commodores (3-2) sputtered offensively out of the gate with Shurmur throwing two interceptions, as many as he had in Vanderbilt's first four games, in the game's first 15 minutes.

"We missed opportunities in the red zone," Mason said. "We were so inconsistent today. I told the guys we aren't playing right but you must be living right."

Sparked by a pair of Power 5 transfers in quarterback Demry Croft and wide receiver Treon Harris, the Tigers (2-1) rode their pass-happy offense and played opportunistic defense for a 13-10 halftime lead.

Vanderbilt responded with two rapid-fire touchdowns -- a 38-yard pass from Shurmur to Kaliya Lipscomb and a weaving 78-yard rush by Ke'Shawn Vaughn -- in the first six minutes of the second half. With a 24-13 lead and its offensive stars clicking, the Commodores finally appeared to be headed to the expected victory.

"(Shurmur's) going to find Kaliya," Mason said. "And Ke'Shawn Vaughn is a special back; he's spectacular with the ball in his hands and when he gets to the second level, he can do some different things."

Indeed, on his touchdown scamper -- the longest for Vanderbilt in six years -- he covered the first 39 yards running diagonally from far hashmark to near sideline, and then made a sharp cut, staying inbounds and avoiding TSU defenders while reversing field and then covering the final 39 yards cutting diagonally all the way back across the field to the far pylon for the touchdown. Officially, it went down as 78 yards; in terms of ground covered, it was nearly 120.

Despite the two highlight-worthy scores, the Tigers refused to go quietly, charging back and putting the game in doubt until Croft, a Minnesota transfer, threw incomplete on fourth down, turning the ball over with 1:25 remaining in the game.

TSU was without leading receiver Chris Rowland, but Harris, who had his best game as a quarterback for the University of Florida against Vanderbilt in 2014, picked up the slack, with eight catches for 109 yards and a touchdown that gave the Tigers a 13-7 lead halfway through the second quarter.

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Vanderbilt: The Commodores certainly had moments of offensive excellence -- Vaughn's touchdown and the play of Lipscomb in particular -- but struggled to slow down their FCS opponents. That doesn't bode well for a team with bowl hopes staring down seven straight SEC games.

Tennessee State: Rod Reed's team missed a chance at a defining upset but may turn out to be a surprise team in the OVC this season.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
TNST	0	13	7	7	27
VAN	0	10	14	7	31

**Scoring Summary** -----

	TNST	VAN
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
TNST TD 14:47		
Steven Newbold 5 Yd pass from Demry Croft (Antonio Zita Kick)	7	0
6 plays, 35 yards, 1:51		
VAN TD 11:23		
Jared Pinkney 4 Yd pass from Kyle Shurmur (Ryley Guay Kick)	7	7
7 plays, 75 yards, 3:24		
TNST TD 6:32		
Treon Harris 31 Yd pass from Demry Croft (Antonio Zita PAT failed)	13	7
9 plays, 75 yards, 4:51		
VAN FG 0:00		
Ryley Guay 20 Yd Field Goal	13	10
6 plays, 54 yards, 0:54		
<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>		
VAN TD 11:10		
Kaliya Lipscomb 38 Yd pass from Kyle Shurmur (Ryley Guay Kick)	13	17
7 plays, 76 yards, 3:50		
VAN TD 9:06		
Ke'Shawn Vaughn 78 Yd Run (Ryley Guay Kick)	13	24
2 plays, 78 yards, 0:22		
TNST TD 6:35		
DeMarco Corbin 2 Yd Run (Antonio Zita Kick)	20	24
7 plays, 73 yards, 2:31		
<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>		
TNST TD 8:02		
Andrew Knox 1 Yd pass from Demry Croft (Antonio Zita Kick)	27	24
10 plays, 72 yards, 5:18		
VAN TD 6:20		
Kaliya Lipscomb 68 Yd pass from Kyle Shurmur (Ryley Guay Kick)	27	31
3 plays, 73 yards, 1:42		

Team Stats	TNST	VAN
First Downs	20	23
Total Yards	384	553
Total Plays	66	64
Avg Gain Per Play	5.8	8.6
Net Yards Rushing	104	256
Rushes	35	34
Yards Per Rush	3.0	7.5
Net Yards Passing	280	297
Comp-Att	22-31	22-30
Yards Per Pass	9.0	9.9
Times Sacked	1	0
Yds Lost To Sacks	-11	0
Interceptions	0	2
Punts	4	1
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	8	2
Penalty Yards	44	15
Fumbles	1	0
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	29:56	30:04

**Individual Stats**

**RUSHING**

TNST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Demry Croft	9	41	4.6	0	17
Shawn McColley	6	25	4.2	0	11
DeMarco Corbin	9	24	2.7	1	8
Te'kendrick Roberson	10	22	2.2	0	6
Team	1	-8	-8.0	0	0
VAN	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Ke'Shawn Vaughn	17	146	8.6	1	78
Khari Blasingame	10	88	8.8	0	35
Donaven Tennyson	2	19	9.5	0	18
Ja'Veon Marlow	1	7	7.0	0	7
Kyle Shurmur	1	6	6.0	0	6
Team	3	-10	-3.3	0	0

**PASSING**

TNST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Demry Croft	22	31	269	8.7	3	0	175.8
VAN	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Kyle Shurmur	22	29	297	10.2	3	2	182.2
Team	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	-

**RECEIVING**

TNST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Treon Harris	8	109	13.6	1	31
Steven Newbold	5	64	12.8	1	20
DeVon Johnson	4	62	15.5	0	24
Kyle Oliver	2	21	10.5	0	12
Miles Cavitt	1	7	7.0	0	7
Aaron Cauthen	1	5	5.0	0	5
Andrew Knox	1	1	1.0	1	1
VAN	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Kaliya Lipscomb	9	174	19.3	2	68
C.J. Bolar	7	71	10.1	0	16
Jared Pinkney	2	28	14.0	1	24
Chris Pierce	1	11	11.0	0	11
Trey Ellis	1	7	7.0	0	7
Jamauri Wakefield	1	6	6.0	0	6
Josh Crawford	1	0	0.0	0	0