

**WEEK SIX
SYRACUSE AT PITTSBURGH**

PITTSBURGH -- The ultimate path of their team's uneven season potentially hanging in the balance, Pittsburgh senior running backs Qadree Ollison and Darrin Hall made a request to head coach Pat Narduzzi as the clock wound down against Syracuse on Saturday.

"We asked for the game to be on our backs," Ollison said. "Just put it on us. Put it on the backs. Put it on the offensive line. Put it on the seniors really. I think that's what we did." Over and over and over again. Pitt survived another typically slow start, a 75-minute weather delay that zapped all of its momentum and a second-half surge by the visiting Orange to finally put Syracuse away 44-37 in overtime, snapping a two-game losing streak and giving the Panthers (3-3, 2-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) a serious confidence boost.

"Our kids needed that one," Pitt head coach Pat Narduzzi said.

Especially after enduring a humbling 31-point loss to No. 12 Central Florida on the road last week, a game in which the Panthers rarely looked competitive. Pitt regrouped behind Hall, Ollison and an offensive line that did whatever it wanted whenever it wanted.

Hall ran for 107 yards and two touchdowns, including a 3-yard burst on the opening possession of overtime that provided the difference. Ollison rolled up 192 yards on 24 carries, including a 69-yard sprint in the first quarter that zapped the Panthers back to life after they fell behind by 14 in the opening 10 minutes.

Narduzzi stuck with Hall and Ollison even after Pitt fell behind 37-34 with 5:53 to go. The Panthers snapped the ball 13 times on their next possession. Eleven times quarterback Kenny Pickett gave it to Hall or Ollison, setting up Alex Kessman's tying 45-yard field goal with 8 seconds remaining in regulation.

"It's just playing with an attitude," Hall said. "They know what's coming. They know what plays we're about to run and they can't stop us. That's the mindset we had that whole second half, 'Hey, we're just going to run it down their throat until we win.'"

It was much the same in overtime. Hall and Ollison accounted for all 25 yards on the clinching touchdown drive, the last 3 coming from Hall, who stuck his right elbow just across the goal line.

"Those two backs are unbelievable," Pickett said. "They showed it today. They've been showing it all year. I think everyone knows we had a two-headed monster backfield with those guys."

COLEMAN'S TIME

Hall's second touchdown put Pitt in front. Sophomore cornerback Therran Coleman sealed the Panthers' eighth consecutive home victory over Syracuse by wresting the ball away from Orange wide receiver Nykeim Johnson on the ensuing snap.

Coleman knew something was coming when he lined up across from Johnson at the start of the play.

"His face was real intent," Coleman said.

So was Coleman. He trailed Johnson to the end zone then came up with his first career pick as he and Johnson tumbled to the ground. His secret?

"(Johnson) was too little," Coleman said.

SLOPPY SYRACUSE

Orange head coach Dino Babers pointed to the game as a test of his team's maturity following a draining loss to ACC-power Clemson last week. Early on it looked like Syracuse had finally grown up. The Orange raced to a quick 14-0 lead less than 10 minutes in.

The Panthers, however, found their footing behind a defense that kept Syracuse senior quarterback Eric Dungey off balance and occasionally off his feet.

"We didn't give it away," Babers said.

Maybe, but the Orange didn't do much late when it mattered to stop the Panthers from taking it either.

"It's a matter of getting people down," Babers said. "When the ball breaks to the secondary, we need (defensive backs) and we need safeties to make tackles, just get them down."

ERRATIC DUNGEY

Dungey struggled to find any rhythm, completing 18 of 38 passes for 195 yards with a touchdown and two picks. He also ran for a team-high 70 yards, most of them on improvised scrambles when the protection in front of him broke down.

"It hurts," Dungey said. "I hate losing. It hurts. ... I've been saying all week Pitt's a dangerous team. We weren't on the same page, the receivers and I on some plays, but we'll get it fixed."

CAN I KICK IT

Heinz Field can be a notoriously difficult place to play for kickers, but Kessman and Syracuse's Andre Szmyt had no problems on a weird, hot, rainy afternoon. Szmyt hit a 54-yarder in the fourth quarter for the Orange while Kessman drilled a 54-yarder and a 55-yarder in the second quarter. The 55-yarder is the longest by a kicker -- college or professional -- at Heinz Field, which also serves as the home of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

"The ball was flying today," Kessman said.

THE TAKEAWAY

Syracuse: The Orange might be improved, but their rushing defense still has a long way to go. A week after letting Clemson's Travis Etienne go for 203 yards and key the Tigers' escape, Syracuse surrendered 265 yards on the ground to Pitt.

Pitt: The Panthers may need to rely heavily on Ollison and Hall the rest of the way. The passing game remains a mystery at the midway point.

	1	2	3	4	OT	T
Final	14	3	14	6	0	37
SYR	14	3	14	6	0	37
PITT	14	6	7	10	7	44

Scoring Summary -----

	SYR	PITT
FIRST QUARTER		
SYR TD 10:54		
Aaron Hackett 1 Yd pass from Eric Dungey (Andre Szmyt Kick)		0
11 plays, 75 yards, 4:06	7	
SYR TD 6:32		
Jarveon Howard 2 Yd Run (Andre Szmyt Kick)		0
5 plays, 42 yards, 1:29	14	
PITT TD 5:47		
Qadree Ollison 69 Yd Run (Alex Kessman Kick)		7
2 plays, 75 yards, 0:45	14	
PITT TD 4:21		
Dane Jackson 35 Yd Fumble Return (Alex Kessman Kick)		14
5 plays, 10 yards, 1:26	14	
SECOND QUARTER		
PITT FG 12:26		
Alex Kessman 54 Yd Field Goal		17
4 plays, -2 yards, 2:07	14	
PITT FG 6:50		
Alex Kessman 55 Yd Field Goal		20
7 plays, 11 yards, 3:30	14	
SYR FG 1:30		
Andre Szmyt 33 Yd Field Goal		20
8 plays, 27 yards, 2:06	17	
THIRD QUARTER		
PITT TD 14:12		
Rafael Araujo-Lopes 68 Yd pass from Kenny Pickett (Alex Kessman Kick)		27
2 plays, 75 yards, 0:48	17	
SYR TD 8:12		
Jarveon Howard 5 Yd Run (Andre Szmyt Kick)		27
5 plays, 58 yards, 1:40	24	
SYR TD 0:21		
Eric Dungey 21 Yd Run (Andre Szmyt Kick)		27
9 plays, 73 yards, 2:37	31	
FOURTH QUARTER		
SYR FG 11:11		
Andre Szmyt 29 Yd Field Goal		27
7 plays, 20 yards, 2:19	34	
PITT TD 7:51		
Darrin Hall 7 Yd Run (Alex Kessman Kick)		34
5 plays, 75 yards, 3:20	34	
SYR FG 5:53		
Andre Szmyt 54 Yd Field Goal		34
7 plays, 39 yards, 1:58	37	
PITT FG 0:08		
Alex Kessman 45 Yd Field Goal		37
13 plays, 48 yards, 5:45	37	
OVERTIME		
PITT TD Darrin Hall 3 Yd Run (Alex Kessman Kick)		44
6 plays, 0 yards, 0:08	37	

Team Stats	SYR	PITT
First Downs	20	18
Total Yards	372	402
Total Plays	80	67
Avg Gain Per Play	4.7	6.0
Net Yards Rushing	177	265
Rushes	42	47
Yards Per Rush	4.2	5.6
Net Yards Passing	195	137
Comp-Att	18-38	11-20
Yards Per Pass	5.1	6.9
Times Sacked	2	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-9	-26
Interceptions	2	1
Punts	5	5
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	5	3
Penalty Yards	24	25
Fumbles	3	2
Fumbles Lost	1	2
Possession	27:36	32:24

Individual Stats

RUSHING						
SYR	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	
Eric Dungey	13	70	5.4	1	29	
Dontae Strickland	8	48	6.0	0	13	
Moe Neal	9	38	4.2	0	7	
Jarveon Howard	7	18	2.6	2	5	
Nykeim Johnson	3	15	5.0	0	8	
Team	2	-12	-6.0	0	0	
PITT	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	
Qadree Ollison	24	192	8.0	1	69	
Darrin Hall	17	107	6.3	2	25	
Maurice Ffrench	1	6	6.0	0	6	
Shocky Jacques-Louis	1	-11	-11.0	0	0	
Kenny Pickett	4	-29	-7.3	0	0	

PASSING							
SYR	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Eric Dungey	18	38	195	5.1	1	2	54.6
PITT	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Kenny Pickett	11	20	137	6.8	1	1	10.1

RECEIVING						
SYR	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	
Jamal Custis	3	70	23.3	0	42	
Taj Harris	4	64	16.0	0	27	
Sean Riley	6	29	4.8	0	9	
Nykeim Johnson	2	26	13.0	0	19	
Dontae Strickland	1	9	9.0	0	9	
Aaron Hackett	1	1	1.0	1	1	
Moe Neal	1	-4	-4.0	0	0	
PITT	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long	
Rafael Araujo-Lopes	2	64	32.0	1	68	
Maurice Ffrench	2	32	16.0	0	32	
Shocky Jacques-Louis	2	16	8.0	0	9	
Qadree Ollison	2	15	7.5	0	11	
John Morgan	1	8	8.0	0	8	
George Aston	2	2	1.0	0	2	