

WEEK EIGHT
UCF AT EAST CAROLINA

GREENVILLE, N.C. -- Darriel Mack Jr. stepped in for Heisman Trophy hopeful McKenzie Milton and rushed for 120 yards and a touchdown, and No. 10 UCF forced five turnovers in beating East Carolina 37-10 for its 20th straight victory.

Nate Evans returned a fumble 94 yards for a momentum-changing touchdown with 10:07 left, Greg McCrae added a 74-yard TD run and the Knights (7-0, 4-0 American Athletic Conference) turned all those takeaways into 24 points.

"I just think our football team continues to compete," coach Josh Heupel said. "We just continue to keep competing, no matter what's going on, and that's the sign of a really mature football team."

UCF -- which was outgained 496-427 -- went up 20-3 by scoring on four consecutive possessions in the second quarter, then made it a full-fledged rout with those late big plays.

Receiver Quadry Jones threw a 42-yard touchdown pass to Adrian Killins on a trick play, and Matthew Wright kicked three field goals for the Knights.

With Milton sitting this one out while in full uniform from the sideline, Mack was 12 of 20 for 69 yards but was more dangerous with his legs, rushing 7 yards for an early touchdown.

Heupel said the decision to rest Milton was made for "overall health" reasons following pregame warmups.

Freshman Holton Ahlers was 29 of 53 for 406 yards with a 29-yard touchdown pass to Trevon Brown, and added 69 yards rushing in his first start. But his fumble while attempting a jump pass inside the 5-yard line was returned by Evans for the game-sealing score.

"Every single time we got into a situation, we either turned the ball over, or we didn't make a good decision," ECU coach Scottie Montgomery said.

The Pirates (2-5, 0-4) have lost three straight and four of five. Jake Verity put ECU up 3-0 midway through the first with a 34-yard field goal.

THE TAKEAWAY

UCF: The big question in the aftermath of this one centered on Milton, after the quarterback said earlier in the week that he tweaked his ankle while scoring the go-ahead touchdown a week earlier at Memphis. The Knights missed him perhaps more than the final score would indicate -- ECU was on the verge of making this a one-score game with 10 minutes left before Evans' fumble return. Now UCF has an open week to get him closer to 100 percent before a visit to dangerous Temple -- which took down No. 20 Cincinnati on Saturday.

East Carolina: The Pirates lost their sixth straight against Top 25 opponents, haven't beaten one since 2014 and haven't knocked off a top-10 team in a decade. But this one didn't feel like so many of the others -- and not necessarily because the Knights weren't at full strength. This was a measurable sign of progress, because each of ECU's previous four ranked opponents hung at least 60 points on them.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
UCF	0	20	3	14	37
ECU	3	0	7	0	10
Scoring Summary -----					
FIRST QUARTER					
UCF	FG 6:22				
Jake Verity	34 Yd Field Goal				
8 plays, 47 yards, 3:02				0	3
SECOND QUARTER					
UCF	FG 12:10				
Matthew Wright	39 Yd Field Goal				
17 plays, 63 yards, 6:18				3	3
UCF	FG 9:44				
Matthew Wright	41 Yd Field Goal				
7 plays, 28 yards, 2:19				6	3
UCF	TD 8:33				
Adrian Killins Jr.	42 Yd pass from Quadry Jones (Matthew Wright Kick)			13	3
2 plays, 53 yards, 0:19					
UCF	TD 4:50				
Darriel Mack Jr.	7 Yd Run (Matthew Wright Kick)				
10 plays, 52 yards, 2:42				20	3
THIRD QUARTER					
ECU	TD 6:04				
Trevon Brown	29 Yd pass from Holton Ahlers (Jake Verity Kick)				
10 plays, 86 yards, 3:39				20	10
UCF	FG 2:49				
Matthew Wright	46 Yd Field Goal				
8 plays, 46 yards, 3:15				23	10
FOURTH QUARTER					
UCF	TD 10:07				
Nate Evans	94 Yd Fumble Return (Matthew Wright Kick)				
14 plays, 93 yards, 4:53				30	10
UCF	TD 6:14				
Greg McCrae	74 Yd Run (Matthew Wright Kick)				
4 plays, 94 yards, 2:08				37	10

Team Stats	UCF	ECU
First Downs	22	29
Total Yards	427	496
Total Plays	76	94
Avg Gain Per Play	5.6	5.3
Net Yards Rushing	316	90
Rushes	55	38
Yards Per Rush	5.7	2.4
Net Yards Passing	111	406
Comp-Att	13-21	29-56
Yards Per Pass	5.3	7.3
Times Sacked	3	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-13	-15
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	6	5
Punt Average	41.8	41.0
Penalties	14	8
Penalty Yards	120	60
Fumbles	1	4
Fumbles Lost	0	4
Possession	31:28	28:32

Individual Stats

RUSHING

UCF	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Darriel Mack Jr.	22	120	5.5	1	27
Greg McCrae	5	99	19.8	1	74
Adrian Killins Jr.	15	44	2.9	0	14
Taj McGowan	5	29	5.8	0	16
Otis Anderson	7	27	3.9	0	6
Team	1	-3	-3.0	0	0
ECU	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Holton Ahlers	27	69	2.6	0	14
Anthony Scott	6	21	3.5	0	11
Trace Christian	1	0	0.0	0	0
Darius Pinnix	4	0	0.0	0	2

PASSING

UCF	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Darriel Mack Jr.	12	20	69	3.5	0	0	89.0
Quadry Jones	1	1	42	42.0	1	0	782.8
ECU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Holton Ahlers	29	53	406	7.7	1	1	121.5
Team	0	3	0	0.0	0	0	-

RECEIVING

UCF	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Adrian Killins Jr.	2	38	19.0	1	42
Michael Colubiale	3	28	9.3	0	12
Tre Nixon	4	21	5.3	0	6
Greg McCrae	1	11	11.0	0	11
Otis Anderson	1	8	8.0	0	8
Dredrick Snelson	1	7	7.0	0	7
Taj McGowan	1	-2	-2.0	0	0
ECU	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Trevon Brown	10	145	14.5	1	29
Deondre Farrier	5	109	21.8	0	41
Darius Pinnix	4	54	13.5	0	22
Anthony Watley	4	44	11.0	0	15
Hussein Howe	3	19	6.3	0	9
Terrell Green	1	17	17.0	0	17
Leroy Henley	1	13	13.0	0	13
Anthony Scott	1	5	5.0	0	5