

WEEK TWELVE

THE CITADEL AT ALABAMA

Tied at half, No. 1 Alabama romps past The Citadel 50-17

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. -- No. 1 Alabama finally found a team that could play toe to toe with the Crimson Tide, at least until halftime.

The surprise twist: It was The Citadel, an FCS team, not a South-eastern Conference rival.

Tua Tagovailoa passed for 340 yards and three touchdowns, but the Tide struggled for 30-plus minutes before putting away The Citadel in a 50-17 victory on Saturday.

Alabama coach Nick Saban said his team learned a lesson -- it must be mentally prepared.

"I don't really care who you're playing," he said.

"Every team that comes here and plays us is going to give us their best shot," Saban added. "These guys have got everything to gain and nothing to lose, and we've got nothing but downside in the game."

Alabama (11-0), which had coasted against SEC opponents, went into halftime tied at 10 with the Bulldogs (4-6). It wasn't until `Bama scored two touchdowns in a 12-second span on its way to a 27-point third quarter that the Tide could rest easy.

"I thought we played a great first half, and our players believed we had the best first half we could have had," The Citadel coach Brent Thompson said. "We could have hung in there a little longer."

Tagovailoa completed 18 of 22 passes in three quarters, including touchdowns of 21 and 5 yards to Jaylen Waddle and a 68-yarder to tight end Irv Smith Jr. He broke AJ McCarron's school single-season record of 30 touchdown passes, reaching 31.

"Thirty-one touchdowns, that's cool," Tagovailoa said. "But we've got another game to finish off this season and another game after that. We're more focused on finishing this season the right way."

Alabama still has Auburn and then No. 5 Georgia in the SEC championship game.

Damien Harris got most of his 83 yards on a 73-yard run in the fourth quarter, but he was injured on the play. He stayed on the ground for a couple of minutes before trotting off after Saban went across the field to check on him.

Saban said Harris appeared to have a mild concussion.

Henry Ruggs III gained 114 yards on six catches.

Dante Smith ran for a 45-yard touchdown in the first half and a 44-yarder in the fourth for The Citadel, whose triple option offense gave Alabama troubles at times. Smith finished with 130 yards on nine carries.

Quarterback Brandon Rainey attempted only two passes, both incomplete, but ran 25 times for 79 yards.

Alabama was coming off back-to-back shutouts of ranked SEC West rivals but lost two fumbles in this one.

Jacob Godek had sent the Bulldogs into the half all even with a 48-yard field goal on the final play.

"We're not scared of anybody," Rainey said. "I think we came out and played our butts off."

After the Tide fumbled away the second-half kickoff, the Bulldogs missed a field goal attempt that would have given them the lead.

Finally, Alabama's offense got going. Tagovailoa hit Ruggs down the right sideline for a 54-yard gain. Then he found Waddle for a 5-yard touchdown and the Tide regained the lead.

Anfernee Jennings scooped and scored on an 18-yard fumble recovery shortly after that, and it was a more comfortable 24-10 game with a lead that continued to grow.

THE BIG PICTURE

The Citadel: Managed to keep Alabama's offense off the field for large chunks of the first half, including 21 plays and trips across midfield on its two opening possessions. Had 60 carries for 275 yards.

Alabama: Didn't flex its muscles until the second half. Kicking troubles continued with Joseph Bulovas missing an extra point and getting another blocked.

HURTS RETURNS

Alabama backup quarterback Jalen Hurts came into the game in the fourth quarter to a loud ovation. Hurts had missed the past two games with an ankle injury, and Saban said the goal going into the game was to get him 12 to 15 plays.

HOME STREAK

Alabama set the school record with its 25th consecutive home win. The previous mark of 24 was set from 1971-74.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
CIT	0	10	0	7	17
ALA	7	3	27	13	50

Scoring Summary -----

	CITA	ALA
FIRST QUARTER		
ALA TD 3:29 Jaylen Waddle 21 Yd pass from Tua Tagovailoa (Joseph Bulovas Kick) 8 plays, 80 yards, 4:23	0	7
second Quarter		
CITA TD 11:42 Dante Smith 45 Yd Run (Jacob Godek Kick) 1 play, 45 yards, 0:10	7	7
ALA FG 4:59 Joseph Bulovas 23 Yd Field Goal 9 plays, 86 yards, 4:07	7	10
CITA FG 0:00 Jacob Godek 48 Yd Field Goal 9 plays, 44 yards, 4:59	10	10
ALA TD 10:26 Jaylen Waddle 5 Yd pass from Tua Tagovailoa (Joseph Bulovas Kick) 5 plays, 72 yards, 2:15	10	17
ALA TD 10:14 Anfernee Jennings 18 Yd Fumble Return (Joseph Bulovas Kick) 1 play, -7 yards, 0:12	10	24
ALA TD 6:16 Irv Smith Jr. 68 Yd pass from Tua Tagovailoa (Joseph Bulovas PAT failed) 4 plays, 85 yards, 1:53	10	30
ALA TD 1:24 Tua Tagovailoa 1 Yd Run (Joseph Bulovas Kick) 6 plays, 63 yards, 2:47	10	37
fourth Quarter		
ALA TD 13:27 DeVonta Smith 7 Yd pass from Jalen Hurts (Joseph Bulovas PAT blocked) 3 plays, 80 yards, 0:39	10	43
TD 7:34 Dante Smith 44 Yd Run (Jacob Godek Kick) 11 plays, 75 yards, 5:53	17	43
ALA TD 4:25 Brian Robinson Jr. 2 Yd Run (Austin Jones Kick) 6 plays, 55 yards, 3:09	17	50

Team Stats	CITA	ALA
First Downs	13	21
Passes for First	0	15
Total Yards	275	561
Total Plays	62	49
Avg Gain Per Play	4.4	11.4
Net Yards Rushing	275	190
Rushes	60	23
Yards Per Rush	4.6	8.3
Net Yards Passing	0	371
Comp-Att	0-2	21-26
Yards Per Pass	0.0	14.3
Times Sacked	1	0
Yds Lost To Sacks	-4	0
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	6	1
Punt Average	45.2	34.0
Penalties	6	6
Penalty Yards	50	68
Fumbles	1	2
Fumbles Lost	1	2
Possession	36:23	23:37

Individual Stats

RUSHING

	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
CITA					
18 Dante Smith	9	130	14.4	45	2
16 Brandon Rainey	25	79	3.2	14	0
8 Lorenzo Ward	10	27	2.7	6	0
26 Keyonte Sessions	8	19	2.4	5	0
5 Clay Harris	4	15	3.8	5	0
42 Brandon Berry	1	3	3.0	3	0
28 Nkem Njoku	3	2	0.7	2	0
ALA					
34 Damien Harris	7	83	11.9	73	0
22 Najee Harris	4	51	12.8	32	0
13 Tua Tagovailoa	4	37	9.3	16	1
5 Ronnie Clark	3	14	4.7	7	0
24 Brian Robinson Jr.	2	4	2.0	2	1
8 Josh Jacobs	2	3	1.5	4	0

PASSING

	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
CITA							
16 Brandon Rainey	0	2	0.0	0	0	0	0.0
ALA							
13 Tua Tagovailoa	18	22	340	15.5	3	0	256.6
2 Jalen Hurts	3	4	75.0	31	7.8	1	222.6

RECEIVING

	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
CITA					
x					
x No The Citadel Receiving					
x					
ALA					
11 Henry Ruggs III	6	114	19.0	54	0
17 Jaylen Waddle	6	90	15.0	29	2
4 Jerry Jeudy	6	77	12.8	22	0
82 Irv Smith Jr.	1	68	68.0	68	1
8 Josh Jacobs	1	15	15.0	15	0
6 DeVonta Smith	1	7	7.0	7	1