

Slugfest: No. 6 Oklahoma outlasts No. 12 WVU 59-56

MORGANTOWN, W.Va. -- No. 6 Oklahoma has been scoffed at for handing points and yards to opponents like presents, and it wasn't any different against No. 12 West Virginia. Yet a couple of defensive gems now have the Sooners playing for their fourth straight Big 12 championship.

Oklahoma scored two defensive touchdowns to support another brilliant performance by Kyler Murray and the Sooners beat No. 12 West Virginia 59-56 Friday night to earn a spot in next week's title game.

Oklahoma (11-1, 8-1, No. 6 CFP) survived a wild and mostly defenseless affair that featured 1,372 yards of offense to earn a rematch Dec. 1 in Arlington, Texas, against No. 11 Texas, which beat Kansas earlier Friday.

"We'll certainly be excited to play those guys," Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley said. "But, more than anything, one huge goal we set out was we want to be the only team ever to win four of these in a row."

Oklahoma also kept its College Football Playoff chances alive. The Sooners remain the only Big 12 team that West Virginia (8-3, 6-3, No. 13 CFP) hasn't beaten since the Mountaineers joined the league in 2012.

Oklahoma players sang West Virginia's anthem, John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads" on the way to the locker room after the game.

"It was fun," Murray said. "There's no other way to describe it."

Murray finished 20 of 27 for 364 yards and three touchdown passes and converted a late fourth down to seal a matchup of Heisman Trophy hopefuls. West Virginia's Will Grier threw for four touchdowns and a career-high 539 yards on 32 of 49 passing. But Grier lost two fumbles, both of which were returned for touchdowns.

"When you score two touchdowns defensively, you like your chances," Riley said.

Oklahoma linebacker Caleb Kelly had a 12-yard TD return in the second quarter.

With the Mountaineers trying to regain momentum early in the fourth, Grier was spun around by defensive end Kenneth Mann during a scramble and lost the ball. Oklahoma linebacker Curtis Bolton picked it up and ran 48 yards for a touchdown to put the Sooners ahead 59-49.

"I'm disappointed for our seniors. We fought hard and came up a little bit short," West Virginia coach Dana Holgorsen said. "As well as we played offensively, giving them 14 points is inexcusable."

Grier said he was trying to throw the ball out of bounds when Mann hit him.

"They got to me quite a bit tonight," he said "To scoop and score both of those is pretty impressive on their part. They made some plays."

Martell Pettaway's 17-yard TD run with 4:20 left made it a one-score game. But Oklahoma recovered the ensuing onside kick and ran out the clock, thanks to Murray, who found CeeDee Lamb for 8 yards on a fourth-and-5 with 2:10 from the West Virginia 40.

THE TAKEAWAY

Oklahoma: The Sooners were unremarkable on defense yet again, but those two stellar plays were the difference. On offense the Sooners surpassed 290 rushing yards for the sixth straight game, coinciding with their six-game winning streak. They also improved their national-best road winning streak to 20 games dating to the 2014 season.

West Virginia: The Mountaineers matched the Sooners punch for punch offensively but made a few more mistakes than Oklahoma and finished the regular season with two straight losses, a huge disappointment for a team that believed they had the right mix to win their first league championship. The Mountaineers will also likely miss out on a New Year's Six bowl for the seventh straight season.

"We didn't make our goal," Holgorsen said. "It's a damn shame."

BIG PERFORMANCES

Oklahoma leading receiver Marquise Brown was Murray's favorite target again. Brown had 11 grabs for 243 yards and two scores. West Virginia's Gary Jennings finished with seven catches for a career-high 225 yards. He and David Sills caught two TDs apiece.

The Sooners' Kennedy Brooks ran for a season-high 182 yards while Murray had 115 yards on the ground, including a 55-yard TD. He averaged 12.7 yards per rush.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

West Virginia will fall in the AP Top 25 but should maintain a top-20 ranking.

<b>Final</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>T</b>
OKLA	14	21	10	14	59
WVU	14	14	21	7	56

Scoring Summary -----

	OKLA	WVU
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
WVU TD 10:09 David Sills V 41 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick) 9 plays, 75 yards, 4:51	0	7
OKLA TD 7:19 Kyler Murray 55 Yd Run (Austin Seibert Kick) 7 plays, 81 yards, 2:50	7	7
WVU TD 3:51 Martell Pettaway 7 Yd Run (Evan Staley Kick) 10 plays, 75 yards, 3:28	7	14
OKLA TD 1:31 Marquise Brown 25 Yd pass from Kyler Murray (Austin Seibert Kick) 7 plays, 72 yards, 2:20	14	14
<b>second Quarter</b>		
OKLA TD 7:12 Trey Sermon 1 Yd Run (Austin Seibert Kick) 2 plays, 66 yards, 0:38	21	14
WVU TD 4:14 David Sills V 10 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick) 7 plays, 75 yards, 2:58	21	21
OKLA TD 3:30 Kennedy Brooks 68 Yd Run (Austin Seibert Kick) 2 plays, 75 yards, 0:44	28	21
OKLA TD 3:06 Caleb Kelly 10 Yd Fumble Return (Austin Seibert Kick) 2 plays, -15 yards, 0:24	35	21
WVU TD 0:18 Kennedy McKoy 1 Yd Run (Evan Staley Kick) 13 plays, 81 yards, 2:48	35	28
<b>third Quarter</b>		
WVU TD 10:32 Gary Jennings Jr. 57 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick) 5 plays, 80 yards, 1:49	35	35
OKLA FG 5:52 Austin Seibert 37 Yd Field Goal 10 plays, 62 yards, 4:40	38	35
WVU TD 1:52 Will Grier 1 Yd Run (Evan Staley Kick) 11 plays, 75 yards, 4:00	38	42
OKLA TD 0:35 Marquise Brown 45 Yd pass from Kyler Murray (Austin Seibert Kick) 4 plays, 75 yards, 1:17	45	42
WVU TD 0:17 Gary Jennings Jr. 75 Yd pass from Will Grier (Evan Staley Kick) 3 plays, 75 yards, 0:18	45	49
<b>fourth Quarter</b>		
OKLA TD 11:19 Grant Calcaterra 2 Yd pass from Kyler Murray (Austin Seibert Kick) 9 plays, 80 yards, 3:58	52	49
OKLA TD 9:58 Curtis Bolton 48 Yd Fumble Return (Austin Seibert Kick) 3 plays, 23 yards, 1:21	59	49
WVU TD 4:20 Martell Pettaway 17 Yd Run (Evan Staley Kick) 9 plays, 80 yards, 2:55	59	56

Team Stats	OKLA	WVU
First Downs	25	33
Total Yards	668	704
Total Plays	65	90
Avg Gain Per Play	10.3	7.8
Net Yards Rushing	304	165
Rushes	38	41
Yards Per Rush	8.0	4.0
Net Yards Passing	364	539
Comp-Att	20-27	32-49
Yards Per Pass	13.5	11.0
Times Sacked	0	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	0	-19
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	1	2
Punt Average	45.0	38.0
Penalties	6	5
Penalty Yards	60	60
Fumbles	1	2
Fumbles Lost	1	2
<b>Possession</b>	<b>28:07</b>	<b>31:53</b>

Individual Stats

RUSHING

OKLA	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
26 Kennedy Brooks	21	182	8.7	68	1
1 Kyler Murray	9	114	12.7	55	1
4 Trey Sermon	5	12	2.4	4	1
WVU	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
6 Kennedy McKoy	16	81	5.1	33	1
32 Martell Pettaway	15	76	5.1	17	2
4 Leddie Brown	5	30	6.0	16	0
7 Will Grier	5	-22	-4.4	2	1

PASSING

OKLA	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
1 Kyler Murray	20	27	364	13.5	3	1	216.6
WVU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
7 Will Grier	32	49	539	11.0	4	0	184.6

RECEIVING

OKLA	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
5 Marquise Brown	11	243	22.1	65	2
2 CeeDee Lamb	5	53	10.6	23	0
45 Carson Meier	2	46	23.0	25	0
80 Grant Calcaterra	2	22	11.0	20	1
WVU	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
Gary Jennings Jr.	7	225	32.1	75	2
13 David Sills V	8	131	16.4	41	2
82 Dominique Maiden	3	52	17.3	30	0
88 Trevon Wesco	4	49	12.3	20	0
84 Jovani Haskins	2	24	12.0	17	0
6 Kennedy McKoy	2	24	12.0	21	0
8 Marcus Simms	2	17	8.5	14	0
1 T.J. Simmons	3	13	4.3	7	0
81 Sam James	1	4	4.0	4	0