

WEEK THIRTEEN

PITTSBURGH AT MIAMI, FL

MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. -- The biggest contribution that a Miami player made on the Hurricanes' regular-season finale against Pittsburgh apparently came a night before kickoff, when Jaquan Johnson addressed his teammates.

He likened adversity to quicksand, and talked about how to escape.

"It really hit us hard, in the heart," running back Travis Homer said.

Homer was apparently listening, as were plenty of other Hurricanes. Homer needed only eight carries to rush for 168 yards, DeeJay Dallas ran back a punt for one of his two scores and Miami knocked off No. 24 Pittsburgh 24-3 on Saturday.

"I think our guys rose to the occasion," Miami coach Mark Richt said. "It was very obvious that it was a dominating defensive performance, and I thought it was a dominating special-teams performance as well."

The Hurricanes (7-5, 4-4 Atlantic Coast Conference) yielded only 200 yards, held Pitt to a 1-for-15 effort on third-down conversion tries and forced 12 punts in a game where they yielded only 11 first downs. Miami also had six sacks and 14 tackles for loss.

"We're 7-5," cornerback Michael Jackson Sr. said, "but we're not a 7-5 defense."

Dallas also had a rushing touchdown for the Hurricanes, saying afterward he's gotten valuable help in recent days from a sports psychologist. And Homer is up to 969 yards this season, and would have a chance to become the 10th runner in Miami history with a 1,000-yard season if he gets 31 in the bowl game. His career rushing total is now 1,979 yards, which moved him four yards past Frank Gore for 12th on the Hurricanes' list.

"Travis was the spark tonight," Dallas said.

Kenny Pickett completed 14 of 22 passes for 130 yards for Pitt (7-5, 6-2), which had already locked up the ACC's Coastal Division and a berth in next weekend's conference title game against Clemson. It was a reversal of last season, when Miami had the Coastal clinched and lost to Pitt in the regular-season finale for both clubs.

"That's the most talented defense we've faced by far," Pickett said.

Homer's 64-yard touchdown in the third quarter put Miami up 17-3, and matched the longest scoring run of his Miami career. It also continued his knack for breaking big plays for scores; he has 12 rushing TDs for the Hurricanes, the average length of them being 27 yards.

Dallas scored on a 65-yard punt return in the second quarter, giving Miami one of those for the second straight week. The one last week came from Jeff Thomas, who left the Hurricanes on Wednesday -- team officials said he was dismissed, while Thomas claimed that his departure was by mutual decision.

Either way, it didn't derail Miami on its Senior Day, even with the passing game struggling again. N'Kosi Perry completed only six of 24 passes for 52 yards, though was hurt by no fewer than seven dropped passes. It was the lowest passing total Miami posted in an ACC game, four yards shy of the 56 the Hurricanes managed against Georgia Tech in 2007.

Alex Kessman's 40-yard field goal for Pitt late in the third quarter allowed the Panthers to avoid the shutout. This was the first ACC season since 2009 that there were no shutouts in conference games.

"Ran into a buzzsaw today," Pitt coach Pat Narduzzi said.

THE TAKEAWAY

Pittsburgh: The Panthers had won four straight before Saturday, averaging 40.8 points in those games. It was Pitt's lowest point total since 2010 -- a 31-3 loss to Miami.

Miami: The Hurricanes' bowl game gives Richt a chance at winning at least eight games for the 17th time in his 18 seasons as a head coach. Miami still has not had a one-game streak of anything under Richt, whose Hurricane tenure has gone thusly -- four wins, then four losses, then 15 wins, then four losses, then five wins, then four losses and, now, two wins.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

The Panthers will almost certainly fall out of the AP Top 25 after one week. The last time Pitt lasted more than two consecutive weeks in the poll was 2009. This current appearance was only the fifth for Pitt in the last 142 editions of the AP Top 25.

WILD COASTAL

The Coastal this year featured Pitt losing to North Carolina, North Carolina going 0-7 in all other ACC games, Miami rolling past Virginia Tech, Virginia Tech beating Virginia and Virginia beating Miami. In other words, the Coastal made minimal sense.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
PITT	0	0	3	0	3
MIAMI	3	7	7	7	24

Scoring Summary -----

FIRST QUARTER

	PITT	MIAMI
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MIAMI FG 10:17

Bubba Baxa 37 Yd Field Goal

	0	3
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6 plays, 62 yards, 1:09

SECOND QUARTER

	PITT	MIAMI
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MIAMI TD 9:08

DeeJay Dallas 65 Yd Punt Return (Bubba Baxa Kick)

	0	10
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3 plays, 6 yards, 1:46

THIRD QUARTER

	PITT	MIAMI
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PITT FG 3:27

Alex Kessman 40 Yd Field Goal

	3	10
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7 plays, 37 yards, 3:02

FOURTH QUARTER

	PITT	MIAMI
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MIAMI TD 10:58

DeeJay Dallas 3 Yd Run (Bubba Baxa Kick)

	3	17
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7 plays, 81 yards, 3:12

Team Stats

	PITT	MIAMI
First Downs	11	12
Total Yards	200	345
Total Plays	62	56
Avg Gain Per Play	3.2	6.2
Net Yards Rushing	69	293
Rushes	38	32
Yards Per Rush	1.8	9.2
Net Yards Passing	131	52
Comp-Att	15-24	6-24
Yards Per Pass	5.5	2.2
Times Sacked	1	6
Yds Lost To Sacks	-4	-46
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	12	7
Punt Average	43.3	40.7
Penalties	10	3
Penalty Yards	100	30
Fumbles	1	3
Fumbles Lost	1	2
Possession	35:34	24:26

Individual Stats

RUSHING

PITT	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
	Darrin Hall	14	47	3.4	0
	Maurice Ffrench	1	31	31.0	0
	Qadree Ollison	9	28	3.1	0
	George Aston	2	5	2.5	0
	V'Lique Carter	1	1	1.0	0
	Todd Sibley Jr.	1	-1	-1.0	0
	Taysir Mack	1	-8	-8.0	0
	Kenny Pickett	9	-34	-3.8	0

MIAMI	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
	Travis Homer	8	168	21.0	1
	N'Kosi Perry	5	46	9.2	0
	DeeJay Dallas	8	39	4.9	1
	Trayone Gray	2	25	12.5	0
	Cam'Ron Davis	8	15	1.9	0
	Team	1	0	0.0	0

PASSING

PITT	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
	Kenny Pickett	14	22	130	5.9	0	113.3
	Jeff George Jr.	1	2	1	0.5	0	54.2
MIAMI	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
	N'Kosi Perry	6	24	52	2.2	0	43.2

RECEIVING

PITT	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
	Rafael Araujo-Lopes	6	67	11.2	0
	Taysir Mack	2	30	15.0	0
	Qadree Ollison	1	16	16.0	0
	Maurice Ffrench	3	13	4.3	0
	V'Lique Carter	1	6	6.0	0
	George Aston	1	3	3.0	0
	Darrin Hall	1	-4	-4.0	0
MIAMI	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
	Mike Harley	2	18	9.0	0
	Travis Homer	1	11	11.0	0
	Evidence Njoku	1	11	11.0	0
	Lawrence Cager	1	8	8.0	0
	Darrell Langham	1	4	4.0	0