

HAWAII BOWL  
HAWAII vs BYU

McDonald throws for 493, leads Hawaii past BYU

HONOLULU -- Hawaii coach Nick Rolovich had this SoFi Hawaii Bowl all figured out, except for the details.

He told his players there would be times when beating BYU seemed out of reach, but he wanted them to expect to win the game in the fourth quarter. And that's what happened Tuesday at Aloha Stadium in a 38-34 victory for the Rainbow Warriors' first win over the Cougars since 2001.

Rolovich just couldn't have scripted how it would happen.

Hawaii scored 31 points by halftime against a BYU defense that had given up more than 30 points in a game once this season, on the road against Washington. The Warriors were blanked so badly in the second half they didn't even get into the red zone until their final possession.

And then, Cole McDonald took them 71 yards in three plays, capping off a magnificent Christmas Eve with a 24-yard touchdown pass to Nick Mardner with 1 minute, 17 seconds remaining.

Khoury Bethley grabbed his second interception of the game -- and the season -- to stop BYU's final chance and give Hawaii only its sixth 10-win season in school history and the first since 2010.

"It sure wasn't looking that good," Rolovich said. "To get a 10-win season by beating BYU, it's hard to write anything better."

McDonald finished with 493 yards passing and four touchdowns, taking him over 4,000 yards for the season. He constantly burned the BYU secondary with the deep ball, and he was at his best at the end.

BYU (7-6) took its only lead of the game on a 20-yard field goal early in the fourth quarter. The Cougars had a chance to run out the clock until Zach Wilson was hurried and threw incomplete on third-and-2.

That gave Hawaii one final opportunity, all it needed.

McDonald had an idea about what the defense was trying to do, and he manipulated the safety by looking right before coming back to the left to find Mardner alone for a 38-yard gain down the left sideline. On the next play, he found Mardner on a post and led him perfectly. Those were the only two catches Mardner had for the game. "I was nervous and excited," McDonald said. "It was destiny for us."

Rolovich played for Hawaii in 2001 when it most recently beat BYU, back when both were in the Western Athletic Conference. This was the first time they had met in a bowl game, with Hawaii (10-5) designated the visiting team on its home field.

BYU wasted a solid game by Wilson, whose father grew up in Hawaii. Wilson threw for 274 yards and ran for 72 yards and two short TDs to help the Cougars rally in the first half.

BYU's last chance ended when Bethley picked off Wilson for the second time, and the celebration was on.

McDonald finished 28-of-46, and he did most of his damage in the first half by throwing for 331 yards and three scores. Of the four touchdown drives, the shortest was 40 yards. That one followed Bethley's first interception. Two plays later, McDonald found Jared Smart on a post route with a perfectly thrown pass that made it 14-0.

Wilson brought the Cougars back, leading them on touchdown drives of 73, 75 and 75 yards, the last one ending on Micah Simon scoring on an 11-yard reverse.

"We knew they had a dynamic offense," BYU coach Kalani Sitake said. "We knew he had to be at our best. Obviously, we didn't make enough plays to win the game. The big plays were the issue, even at the end of the game."

BYU still leads the series 23-9.

THE TAKEAWAY

Hawaii: McDonald used the middle of the field and was not afraid to go deep on a BYU defense that had been stubborn against the pass most of the year.

BYU: The Cougars had great balance with the run (231 yards) and pass (274 yards). But they were susceptible to the deep ball all game, and it cost them in the end.

AIR HAWAII

Hawaii receivers Smart and JoJo Ward each went over 1,000 yards for the year, joining Cedric Byrd II. This is the sixth time in NCAA history that a team had three players with at least 1,000 yards receiving in a season. Hawaii has done it twice, the other time in 2007. The other schools are Texas Tech (2003), Tulsa (2003), Houston (2009 and Fresno State (2013).

RUN STOPPERS

BYU's front line was so dominant that Hawaii finished with 2 yards rushing on 27 carries. The longest run of the game was a scramble by McDonald for 9 yards on the play before his two passes to Mardner.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
HAW	14	17	0	7	38
BYU	7	17	7	3	34

Scoring Summary -----

FIRST QUARTER		HAW	BYU
HAW TD 7:32 Jared Smart 7 Yd pass from Cole McDonald (Ryan Meskell Kick)			
10 plays, 82 yards, 5:09		7	0
HAW TD 4:55 Jared Smart 40 Yd pass from Cole McDonald (Ryan Meskell Kick)			
2 plays, 40 yards, 0:51		14	0
BYU TD 0:54 Lopini Kattoa 1 Yd Run (Jake Oldroyd Kick)			
10 plays, 73 yards, 4:01		14	7
SECOND QUARTER		HAW	BYU
HAW TD 13:33 Cole McDonald 1 Yd Run (Ryan Meskell Kick)			
6 plays, 78 yards, 2:21		21	7
BYU TD 9:42 Zach Wilson 1 Yd Run (Jake Oldroyd Kick)			
8 plays, 75 yards, 3:51		21	14
HAW FG 5:50 Ryan Meskell 46 Yd Field Goal			
9 plays, 49 yards, 3:52		24	14
BYU TD 3:16 Micah Simon 11 Yd Run (Jake Oldroyd Kick)			
7 plays, 75 yards, 2:34		24	21
HAW TD 1:16 Jason-Matthew Sharsh 18 Yd pass from Cole McDonald (Ryan Meskell Kick)			
9 plays, 71 yards, 2:00		31	21
BYU FG 0:18 Jake Oldroyd 37 Yd Field Goal			
8 plays, 50 yards, 0:58		31	24
THIRD QUARTER		HAW	BYU
BYU TD 11:58 Zach Wilson 2 Yd Run (Jake Oldroyd Kick)			
2 plays, 6 yards, 0:39		31	31
FOURTH QUARTER		HAW	BYU
BYU FG 14:37 Jake Oldroyd 20 Yd Field Goal			
8 plays, 54 yards, 3:09		31	34
HAW TD 1:17 Nick Mardner 24 Yd pass from Cole McDonald (Ryan Meskell Kick)			
4 plays, 86 yards, 0:44		38	34

Team Stats	HAW	BYU
First Downs	29	19
Passes for First	16	17
Rushes for First	11	2
Penalties for First	2	0
Third Down Efficiency	6-14	9-18
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	1-1
Total Yards	505	495
Total Plays	81	74
Avg Gain Per Play	6.2	6.7
Net Yards Rushing	231	2
Rushes	40	27
Yards Per Rush	5.8	0.1
Net Yards Passing	274	493
Comp-Att	24-41	28-47
Yards Per Pass	6.7	10.5
Times Sacked	1	5
Yds Lost To Sacks	-3	-36
Interceptions	2	0
Punts	4	6
Punt Average	41.3	42.2
Penalties	2	6
Penalty Yards	20	59
Fumbles	2	0
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Time of Poss	29:29	30:31

Individual Stats

RUSHING							
HAWAII	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Miles Reed	10	17	1.7	0	4		
Jason-Matthew Sharsh	1	3	3.0	0	3		
Cedric Byrd II	1	2	2.0	0	2		
Dayton Furuta	1	1	1.0	0	1		
Team	2	-4	-2.0	0	0		
Chevan Cordeiro	1	-7	-7.0	0	0		
Cole McDonald	11	-10	-0.9	1	9		
BYU	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Tyler Allgeier	8	77	9.6	0	36		
Zach Wilson	14	72	5.1	2	12		
Lopini Katoa	11	51	4.6	1	15		
Aleva Hifo	3	12	4.0	0	7		
Micah Simon	1	11	11.0	1	11		
Dax Milne	1	6	6.0	0	6		
Masen Wake	1	2	2.0	0	2		
Emmanuel Esukpa	1	0	0.0	0	0		
PASSING							
HAWAII	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Cole McDonald	28	46	493	10.7	4	0	86.5
Chevan Cordeiro	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	0.2
BYU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Zach Wilson	24	40	274	6.9	0	2	58.7
Micah Simon	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	2.8
RECEIVING							
HAWAII	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
JoJo Ward	7	159	22.7	0	47		
Jared Smart	7	142	20.3	2	58		
Jason-Matthew Sharsh	7	90	12.9	1	21		
Nick Mardner	2	62	31.0	1	38		
Cedric Byrd II	3	29	9.7	0	20		
Lincoln Victor	1	6	6.0	0	6		
Miles Reed	1	5	5.0	0	5		
BYU	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Matt Bushman	6	91	15.2	0	31		
Aleva Hifo	6	55	9.2	0	24		
Dax Milne	3	54	18.0	0	26		
Micah Simon	4	45	11.3	0	17		
Talon Shumway	3	22	7.3	0	9		
Lopini Katoa	2	7	3.5	0	4		