

**FIRST RESPONDER BOWL
WESTERN MICHIGAN VS WKU**

DALLAS -- Western Kentucky freshman kicker Cory Munson ran onto the field, then off and then back on. All of that before kicking a career-long 52-yard field goal with no time left after a rules review moved him five yards closer to the goal posts.

And Munson, who'd sliced a 29-yarder wide right on the final play of the first half, closed the game with the kick that gave the Hilltoppers a 23-20 victory over Western Michigan in the First Responder Bowl on Monday.

"I was just breathing and saying to myself: 'You got this. Don't worry about the last kick. You got this one. Just stay calm,' and I just swung through it," Munson said. "Next thing I knew, it was up there."

The Hilltoppers (9-4) drove 36 yards in 27 seconds before Munson kicked his third field goal in four tries. The game appeared headed to overtime when Ty Storey's desperation heave was knocked down by the Broncos. But the Broncos were hit with a five-yard defensive substitution penalty and Munson was awarded an untimed down after a video review determined that Western Michigan had 12 players on the field as it switched between its field-goal unit and regular defense.

"We knew we could make the kick when we saw they had 12 men on the field and might get penalized," first-year Western Kentucky coach Tyson Helton said. "I wanted our true freshman Cory Munson to get a chance to kick it, and he did. It was a great kick."

Munson had tied the score at 20 on a 31-yarder with 1:36 to play. He also kicked a 26-yarder.

Thiago Kapps' 20-yard field goal with 4:58 to play gave Western Michigan (7-6) a 20-17 lead.

"When they have their Hail Mary team and then the kickoff team and then the Hail Mary team out there, you have to stand over the ball and give us time to change," Western Michigan coach Tim Lester said, "and it didn't happen."

Kapps' field goal, his second of the game, capped a 62-yard drive that took 5:35 after Western Kentucky had tied the score on a 15-yard touchdown pass from Storey to Lucky Jackson with 10:40 to go. Jackson had 17 catches for 148 yards and was named the game's most valuable player.

Western Michigan's other touchdowns came on a 6-yard pass from Jon Wassink to DaShon Bussell midway through the third quarter and an 88-yard interception return by Kareem Ali in the first half's closing minutes.

Storey, a graduate transfer from Arkansas, threw a 17-yard pass to Jahcour Pearson in the second quarter for the Hilltoppers' other touchdown.

THE TAKEAWAY

Western Kentucky: The Hilltoppers will lose only two defensive starters from a unit that went into the bowl season ranked 21st in FBS scoring defense. With Storey leaving, Steven Duncan figures to return to No. 1 after starting this season's first three games as a junior before injuring his left foot and missing the rest of the year.

Western Michigan: The Broncos will lose five starters each on offense and defense, including their three-year starter at quarterback (Wassink) and the Mid-American Conference players of the year on offense (RB LeVante Bellamy) and defense (LB Treshaun Hayward).

PASSED ON FIELD GOAL

Western Michigan could have attempted a go-ahead field goal of about 47 yards with 31 seconds left but instead went for it on fourth-and-3 at the Western Kentucky 30. Wassink's pass into the end zone intended for Giovanni Ricci was broken up by Ta'Corian Darden.

Lester said he passed on a field goal try because the kick would have been into the wind. Kapps' long this season was 45 yards.

VIVA HILLTOPPER

Lucky Jackson shares the name of Elvis Presley's lead character in "Viva Las Vegas." The senior now also owns the school record for catches in a game, became the fourth Western Kentucky player to have 1,000 receiving yards in a season and moved into second place in career catches with 209, behind Taywan Taylor's 253.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
WKU	0	10	0	13	23
WMU	3	7	7	3	20

Scoring Summary -----

	WKU	WMU
FIRST QUARTER		
WKU FG 4:17		
Thiago Kapps 30 Yd Field Goal	0	3
13 plays, 57 yards, 6:11		
SECOND QUARTER		
WKU TD 10:54		
Jahcour Pearson 17 Yd pass from Ty Storey (Cory Munson Kick)	7	3
11 plays, 93 yards, 5:28		
WKU FG 2:22		
Cory Munson 26 Yd Field Goal	10	3
12 plays, 68 yards, 5:25		
WKU TD 0:59		
Kareem Ali 88 Yd Interception Return (Thiago Kapps Kick)	10	10
7 plays, 45 yards, 0:54		
THIRD QUARTER		
WKU TD 8:18		
DaShon Bussell 6 Yd pass from Jon Wassink (Thiago Kapps Kick)	10	17
10 plays, 90 yards, 4:30		
FOURTH QUARTER		
WKU TD 10:40		
Lucky Jackson 5 Yd pass from Ty Storey (Cory Munson Kick)	17	17
12 plays, 80 yards, 6:32		
WKU FG 4:58		
Thiago Kapps 20 Yd Field Goal	17	20
12 plays, 62 yards, 5:42		
WKU FG 1:36		
Cory Munson 31 Yd Field Goal	20	20
9 plays, 55 yards, 3:22		
WKU FG 0:00		
Cory Munson 52 Yd Field Goal	23	20
5 plays, 36 yards, 0:27		

Team Stats	WKU	WMU
First Downs	28	19
Passes for First	20	10
Rushes for First	5	7
Penalties for First	3	2
Third Down Efficiency	7-15	5-15
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-2	1-2
Total Yards	481	307
Total Plays	80	67
Avg Gain Per Play	6.0	4.6
Net Yards Rushing	123	114
Rushes	28	31
Yards Per Rush	4.4	3.7
Stat Name		
Net Yards Passing	358	193
Comp-Att	35-52	19-36
Yards Per Pass	6.9	5.4
Times Sacked	2	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-12	-2
Interceptions	2	1
Punts	3	5
Punt Average	41.0	46.4
Penalties	4	6
Penalty Yards	56	64
Fumbles	0	1
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	32:01	27:59

Individual Stats

RUSHING

WKU	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Gaej Walker	15	93	6.2	0	39
Ty Storey	13	30	2.3	0	11
WMU	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
LeVante Bellamy	18	60	3.3	0	7
Jon Wassink	6	26	4.3	0	13
Davon Tucker	5	24	4.8	0	11
Sean Tyler	2	4	2.0	0	3

PASSING

WKU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Ty Storey	35	51	358	7.0	2	2	61.2
Team	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--
WMU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Jon Wassink	19	36	193	5.4	1	1	38.1

RECEIVING

WKU	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Lucky Jackson	17	148	8.7	1	20
Joshua Simon	6	105	17.5	0	30
Gaej Walker	4	40	10.0	0	20
Jahcour Pearson	5	32	6.4	1	17
Jacquez Sloan	1	21	21.0	0	21
Quin Jernighan	2	12	6.0	0	7
WMU	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Sky Moore	4	68	17.0	0	32
DaShon Bussell	4	51	12.8	1	34
Corey Crooms	2	24	12.0	0	20
Giovanni Ricci	4	20	5.0	0	7
Davon Tucker	1	11	11.0	0	11
Keith Mixon Jr.	2	9	4.5	0	8
Sean Tyler	1	8	8.0	0	8
LeVante Bellamy	1	2	2.0	0	2