

WEEK FOUR  
UCF at PITTSBURGH

'Pitt Special' ends UCF's 27-game reg.-season run

PITTSBURGH -- Wide receiver Aaron Matthews hit quarterback Kenny Pickett on a 3-yard, fourth-down touchdown pass with 56 seconds remaining, and Pittsburgh stunned No. 15 UCF 35-34 on Saturday.

The Panthers (2-2) ended UCF's 27-game regular-season winning streak on a play head coach Pat Narduzzi called the "Pitt Special" in a nod to the Philadelphia Eagles, who ran a similar play two seasons ago in their Super Bowl victory over the New England Patriots. Pitt trailed by six when Pickett drove the Panthers to the UCF 3. Running back A.J. Davis took a direct snap with Pickett going in motion. Davis handed the ball to Matthews, who rolled to his right and hit Pickett in the end zone. UCF's last-gasp drive went nowhere.

Pickett completed 25 of 47 pass attempts for 224 yards with a touchdown despite leaving briefly with a right arm injury. Maurice Ffrench and Dontavious Butler-Jenkins caught touchdown passes for the Panthers, who bounced back from an emotional loss to rival Penn State last week by withstanding a 31-point outburst from the Knights (3-1) in the middle of the game.

UCF quarterback Gabriel Dillon passed for 338 yards and two touchdowns but also threw his first two interceptions of the season. Gabriel Davis hauled in 10 passes for 151 yards and two scores, but the Knights' high-tempo offense didn't run as efficiently as it had during three blowouts to start the season.

UCF finished with 423 yards, 180 fewer than its season average.

The Panthers reeled off the game's first 21 points, including an 18-yard blocked punt return for a touchdown midway through the second quarter. Trailing by three touchdowns for the first time since a blowout loss to Michigan in 2016, UCF responded emphatically, with a little help from the Panthers.

Pitt running back A.J. Davis fumbled deep in Panthers territory with 5:41 left in the first half. Adrian Killins scored four plays later, and UCF was off and running.

Gabriel found Gabe Davis for two third-quarter touchdowns. Those touchdowns were sandwiched around an 87-yard punt return for a score by Otis Anderson, who broke several tackles while racing down the left sideline to the end zone.

Gabriel's 28-yard rainbow to Davis gave UCF 31 points in less than a quarter. Pitt backup quarterback Nick Patti's first career touchdown pass, a 6-yard toss to Butler-Jenkins, drew the Panthers within three late in the third quarter. The Panthers had a chance to tie it early in the fourth, but Alex Kessman's 40-yard attempt sailed wide.

Gabriel led a long scoring drive -- including a conversion on fourth-and-1 at the UCF 47 -- that ended with a Dylan Barnas 28-yard field goal with 4:36 to go.

Pitt, which opted to attempt a field goal while down seven in the fourth quarter against Penn State last week, moved steadily down the field. This time, the Panthers dialed up a play that gave them a victory that should provide their season with a massive jolt.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Expect UCF to take a drop after losing in the regular season for the first time since 2016.

THE TAKEAWAY

UCF: Gabriel should have a stranglehold on the starting job even with Darriel Mack Jr. on the way back from an ankle injury suffered in July. Notre Dame transfer Brandon Wimbush figures to be out of the picture completely. He played just one snap, getting tackled for a loss in the first quarter.

Pitt: The Panthers face an uphill climb in the ACC's Coastal Division after opening the season with a loss to No. 21 Virginia, but Pitt could be a handful once conference play starts in earnest next month. The secondary plays with swagger, and Pickett is becoming more comfortable by the week in new offensive coordinator Mark Whipple's system.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
UCF	0	10	21	3	34
PITT	7	14	7	7	35

Scoring Summary -----

	UCF	PITT
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
PITT TD 9:36 A.J. Davis 2 Yd Run (Alex Kessman Kick)	0	7
9 plays, 75 yards, 3:55		
<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>		
PITT TD 14:31 Maurice Ffrench 2 Yd pass from Kenny Pickett (Alex Kessman Kick)	0	14
12 plays, 72 yards, 4:46		
PITT TD 8:58 Wendell Davis 18 Yd Return of Blocked Punt (Alex Kessman Kick)	0	21
3 plays, -3 yards, 1:35		
UCF TD 4:49 Adrian Killins Jr. 11 Yd Run (Dylan Barnas Kick)	7	21
3 plays, 27 yards, 0:52		
UCF FG 0:04 Dylan Barnas 43 Yd Field Goal	10	21
8 plays, 68 yards, 1:04		
<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>		
UCF TD 11:25 Gabriel Davis 10 Yd pass from Dillon Gabriel (Dylan Barnas Kick)	17	21
5 plays, 87 yards, 1:21		
UCF TD 8:40 Otis Anderson 87 Yd Punt Return (Dylan Barnas Kick)	24	21
5 plays, 8 yards, 2:45		
UCF TD 6:19 Gabriel Davis 28 Yd pass from Dillon Gabriel (Dylan Barnas Kick)	31	21
5 plays, 68 yards, 1:33		
PITT TD 4:11 Dontavious Butler-Jenkins 6 Yd pass from Nick Patti (Alex Kessman Kick)	31	28
5 plays, 75 yards, 2:08		
<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>		
UCF FG 4:36 Dylan Barnas 28 Yd Field Goal	34	28
10 plays, 51 yards, 3:31		
PITT TD 0:59 Kenny Pickett 3 Yd pass from Aaron Mathews (Alex Kessman Kick)	34	35
12 plays, 79 yards, 3:40		

Team Stats	UCF	PITT
First Downs	20	30
Passes for First	7	14
Rushes for First	8	11
Penalties for First	5	5
Third Down Efficiency	4-16	5-17
Fourth Down Efficiency	2-4	2-2
Total Yards	423	439
Total Plays	76	88
Avg Gain Per Play	5.6	5.0
Net Yards Rushing	85	196
Rushes	34	37
Yards Per Rush	2.5	5.3
Net Yards Passing	338	243
Comp-Att	25-42	28-51
Yards Per Pass	8.0	4.8
Times Sacked	6	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-35	-5
Interceptions	2	0
Punts	6	7
Punt Average	44.5	45.3
Penalties	7	8
Penalty Yards	74	95
Fumbles	1	2
Fumbles Lost	0	1
Time of Poss	24:18	35:42

Individual Stats

RUSHING

UCF	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Adrian Killins Jr.	8	46	5.8	1	36
Greg McCrae	13	40	3.1	0	10
Otis Anderson	6	37	6.2	0	13
Brandon Wimbush	1	-2	-2.0	0	0
Dillon Gabriel	6	-36	-6.0	0	0
PITTSBURGH	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
A.J. Davis	13	65	5.0	1	8
Kenny Pickett	12	61	5.1	0	17
Vincent Davis	5	34	6.8	0	9
Nick Patti	2	18	9.0	0	10
Maurice Ffrench	1	14	14.0	0	14
V'Lique Carter	4	4	1.0	0	3

PASSING

UCF	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Dillon Gabriel	25	42	338	8.0	2	2	32.7
PITTSBURGH	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Kenny Pickett	25	47	224	4.8	1	0	45.7
Nick Patti	2	3	16	5.3	1	0	96.9
Aaron Mathews	1	1	3	3.0	1	0	100.0

RECEIVING

UCF	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Gabriel Davis	10	151	15.1	2	65
Tre Nixon	7	136	19.4	0	50
Jacob Harris	2	43	21.5	0	41
Jake Hescocock	3	7	2.3	0	6
Marlon Williams	1	6	6.0	0	6
Greg McCrae	2	-5	-2.5	0	4
PITTSBURGH	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Taysir Mack	6	87	14.5	0	22
Maurice Ffrench	7	50	7.1	1	12
Dontavious Butler-Jenkins	4	25	6.3	1	12
Aaron Mathews	1	24	24.0	0	24
Will Gragg	2	20	10.0	0	11
Nakia Griffin-Stewart	1	14	14.0	0	14
A.J. Davis	2	13	6.5	0	8
V'Lique Carter	3	8	2.7	0	4
Kenny Pickett	1	3	3.0	1	3
Vincent Davis	1	-1	-1.0	0	0