

WEEK FIVE
NAVY at MEMPHIS

Memphis remains undefeated with a 35-23 win over Navy

MEMPHIS, Tenn. -- Midway through the second quarter Thursday night, everything was going Navy's way. As usual, the Midshipmen were controlling the ball, their defense was living up to its new reputation as a stingy unit and Memphis was struggling on both sides of the ball with Navy holding a 20-7 lead. "They looked tired on defense," Navy coach Ken Niumatalolo said. "We felt like we had them right in our wheelhouse." Things were so bad early in the third quarter, the Memphis fans were booing quarterback Brady White. Then things changed. White led a second-half rally, finishing the game with 196 yards passing and three touchdowns as Memphis used big plays to defeat Navy 35-23. Kenneth Gainwell rushed for 104 yards, including a 75-yard touchdown on the Tigers opening play from scrimmage as Memphis (4-0, 1-0 American Athletic Conference) knocked Navy from the unbeaten ranks. "That game is a game -- we talked about it all week long -- that is a program-defining game," Memphis coach Mike Norvell said. "The reason being because of who we went against. That's a good Navy football team."

Malcolm Perry led the Midshipmen (2-1, 1-1) with 82 yards passing and 91 yards rushing. He ran for two touchdowns and threw for another. Keoni Makekau rushed for 101 yards for Navy.

The game was a contrast in styles with Navy grinding out yards and maintaining possession, while Memphis capitalized on big plays. The Tigers scored on long runs, a 99-yard kickoff return by Gabriel Rogers and the trio of touchdown passes from White, who was booed by Tigers fans early in the second half as the offense struggled under his leadership.

"You worry about that at times as a coach," Norvell said. "When there's a lot of outside influence that might not be positive all the time, you've got to truly believe in yourself, be true to who you are and trust your training. That's what he did."

After Navy took a 20-7 lead, Memphis scored three unanswered touchdowns to pull away in the second half. The run started after the Navy touchdown -- Perry's second 1-yard run -- put the Midshipmen up. Rogers took the ensuing kickoff and returned it 99 yards for the touchdown, pulling Memphis within 20-14 at the break.

"That took so much wind out of us," Niumatalolo said of Rogers' return. During the first half, the Memphis defense, which entered the game allowing opponents an average of 226 yards, was mystified by Navy's triple option. The Midshipmen grabbed chunks of yards in the rushing game, while Perry kept the Tiger defense off balance with occasional passes, including a 17-yard scoring toss to Chance Warren for an early lead. "That's Navy offense. That's how we win games," Perry said.

It was the Navy defense that initially was living up to its billing, stifling the Memphis offense. Even when Memphis reached the red zone, a fumble stalled the drive. Penalties and a missed field goal only contributed to the Memphis woes as the Tigers collected only 98 yards of offense, in the first half, and that included Gainwell's opening burst.

By the early stages of the second half, the Tiger faithful were booing White. Not long after that, Memphis put its offense together and the Tiger defense started to stymie the Midshipmen holding Navy to 81 yards of offense in the second half.

"To come out and not play our best ball in the first half, see our guys respond and continue to keep believing in each other (was impressive)," Norvell said, later adding: "Everything (the Midshipmen) do is a challenge. They came out and played an incredible game, had a great plan against us. "But our kids wouldn't be denied."

TAKEAWAY

Navy: As expected, Navy controlled the ball and dominated time of possession at 38:39, and while it was successful in the first half, the Memphis defense adjusted in the second half. Meanwhile, the Navy defense that had been successful the first two games, continued to give up big plays at key times.

Memphis: The Tigers defense looked baffled in the first half, but adjusted to better control Perry's mastery at handling the ball. Quarterback Brady White managed to shut out the boos from Memphis fans early in the second half and bring the Tigers back for the victory.

FOR THE DEFENSE

Memphis safety Sanchez Blake led the Tiger defense with a team-best nine tackles. His interception of Navy reserve quarterback Perry Olsen on fourth-and-15 with about 2 minutes left sealed the win.

END OF A STREAK

Makekau rushing for 101 yards broke a string of 16 straight games in which defenses under Memphis coordinator Adam Fuller had not had a runner reach the century mark, that included three games this season, Fuller's first with the Tigers.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Playing the early game of the college football week, there is plenty of time to see if there is any shuffling in the Top 25. With Memphis in the category of "receiving votes" this week, and remaining undefeated, sneaking into the rankings is not out of the question, depending on losses by other teams.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
NAVY	13	7	0	3	23
MEM	7	7	14	7	35

Scoring Summary -----

	NAVY	MEM
FIRST QUARTER		
NAVY TD 9:55 Malcolm Perry 1 Yd Run (Bijan Nichols Kick)		
10 plays, 75 yards, 5:05	7	0
MEM TD 9:43 Kenneth Gainwell 75 Yd Run (Riley Patterson Kick)		
1 play, 75 yards, 0:12	7	7
NAVY TD 0:44 Chance Warren 17 Yd pass from Malcolm Perry (Bijan Nichols PAT failed)		
10 plays, 86 yards, 4:59	13	7
SECOND QUARTER		
NAVY TD 7:01 Malcolm Perry 1 Yd Run (Bijan Nichols Kick)		
10 plays, 74 yards, 4:43	20	7
MEM TD 6:48 Gabriel Rogers 99 Yd Kickoff Return (Riley Patterson Kick)		
0 plays, 0 yards, 0:13	20	14
THIRD QUARTER		
MEM TD 9:05 Kedarian Jones 5 Yd pass from Brady White (Riley Patterson Kick)		
6 plays, 50 yards, 3:10	20	21
MEM TD 3:37 Antonio Gibson 73 Yd pass from Brady White (Riley Patterson Kick)		
3 plays, 70 yards, 1:45	20	28
FOURTH QUARTER		
NAVY FG 12:17 Bijan Nichols 49 Yd Field Goal		
12 plays, 47 yards, 6:20	23	28
MEM TD 11:27 Damonte Coxie 31 Yd pass from Brady White (Riley Patterson Kick)		
4 plays, 59 yards, 0:50	23	35

Team Stats	NAVY	MEM
First Downs	20	12
Passes for First	4	7
Rushes for First	15	4
Penalties for First	1	1
Third Down Efficiency	7-17	4-10
Fourth Down Efficiency	3-5	0-0
Total Yards	373	301
Total Plays	79	43
Avg Gain Per Play	4.7	7.0
Net Yards Rushing	291	105
Rushes	66	25
Yards Per Rush	4.4	4.2
Net Yards Passing	82	196
Comp-Att	6-13	14-18
Yards Per Pass	6.3	10.9
Times Sacked	2	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-10	-23
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	4	4
Punt Average	45.3	44.0
Penalties	6	5
Penalty Yards	55	39
Fumbles	2	2
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Time of Poss	38:39	21:21

Individual Stats

RUSHING

NAVY	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Keoni-Kordell Makekau	8	101	12.6	0	41
Malcolm Perry	25	91	3.6	2	27
CJ Williams	5	27	5.4	0	10
Chance Warren	2	19	9.5	0	18
Nelson Smith	8	19	2.4	0	8
Isaac Ruoss	8	18	2.3	0	4
Tazh Maloy	4	17	4.3	0	13
Perry Olsen	5	1	0.2	0	4
Myles Fells	1	-2	-2.0	0	0
MEMPHIS					
Kenneth Gainwell	14	104	7.4	1	75
Kylan Watkins	3	18	6.0	0	16
Traveon Samuel	1	14	14.0	0	14
Team	3	-12	-4.0	0	0
Brady White	4	-19	-4.8	0	3

PASSING

NAVY	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Malcolm Perry	6	10	82	8.2	1	0	47
Team	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--
Perry Olsen	0	2	0	0.0	0	1	10.9
MEMPHIS							
Brady White	14	18	196	10.9	3	0	70.8

RECEIVING

NAVY	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Ryan Mitchell	2	52	26.0	0	47
Chance Warren	2	20	10.0	1	17
Mychal Cooper	1	8	8.0	0	8
Myles Fells	1	2	2.0	0	2
MEMPHIS					
Antonio Gibson	3	105	35.0	1	73
Damonte Coxie	3	41	13.7	1	31
Kedarian Jones	4	36	9.0	1	13
Kenneth Gainwell	2	9	4.5	0	13
Joseph Dorceus	1	7	7.0	0	7
Traveon Samuel	1	-2	-2.0	0	0