

WEEK SEVEN
ALABAMA at TEXAS A&M

Tagovailoa, No. 1 Tide roll past No. 24 Texas A&M 47-28

COLLEGE STATION, Texas -- Alabama is back on top and Tua Tagovailoa and the Tide look to stay there for a while.

Tagovailoa threw four touchdowns to smash a school career record, and No. 1 Alabama’s offense kept rolling along behind his powerful left arm with a 47-28 victory over No. 24 Texas A&M on Saturday. Tagovailoa threw his first interception of the season but his first touchdown of the game made him Alabama’s career passing touchdowns leader, passing A.J. McCarron. The junior now has 81 for his career and leads the nation with 27 on the season.

He shrugged off the school record to focus on the importance of getting a win in Alabama’s first game as No. 1 this season, and doing it against the Tide’s first ranked opponent in front of a stadium record crowd of 106,479. “You just revert back to your training. I’ve experienced playing at a place like Tennessee, then going to LSU, Ole Miss ... Everyone wants to beat Alabama,” Tagovailoa said. “We’re not done yet. As a team we have to continue to grow.”

Alabama (6-0, 3-0 Southeastern Conference) trailed briefly when Texas A&M scored a touchdown on its first possession.

Tagovailoa took over from there. He led four consecutive scoring drives, which included three touchdown passes that came on third down. The only blemish was the interception thrown in the Texas A&M end zone late in the second quarter that could have put away the game. Tagovailoa spread the scoring around, with all of his TD strikes going to different receivers. His two longest of the day were a 47-yarder to DeVonta Smith in the first quarter and a pinpoint 33-yarder to Henry Ruggs III in the third. “I feel I have a relationship with everyone, a good connection with everyone,” Tagovailoa said. Alabama didn’t punt until there was less than 2 minutes left in the third quarter. Najee Harris rushed for 114 yards. Jaylen Waddle scored Alabama’s first touchdown on a 31-yard catch-and-run when he shook four defenders, and he also had a big day on punt returns with four for 128 yards. Ever the perfectionist, Alabama coach Nick Saban still found some things to pick over.

He didn’t like the consecutive personal foul penalties that set up a Texas A&M scoring drive, and a rash of late penalties, which included Smith getting ejected in the final minute for throwing a punch. Texas A&M had kept the game within two scores into the fourth quarter. “We really could have broken the game open early,” Saban said. “Didn’t finish the game with class.” Kellen Mond passed for 264 yards and two touchdowns and ran for a score for the Aggies (3-3, 1-2).

THE TAKEAWAY
Alabama: The Tide’s young defense recorded five sacks but was prone to giving up some big plays that kept the Aggies hanging around. Tagovailoa’s fourth touchdown pass made it 34-13, but a penalty negated an interception before blown coverage allowed a wide-open touchdown pass. But with Tagovailoa running the offense as he’s doing, it didn’t matter.

Texas A&M: A brutal schedule keeps beating up the Aggies. Texas A&M lost its second game to a top-ranked opponent this season. The Aggies fell to then-No. 1 Clemson on Sept. 7. Texas A&M is one of just five schools to face the No. 1 team twice in a season since the poll began in 1936, having also done it in 1970. “We have to push through it. Against good people, you can’t almost get there. You got to be all the way, executing on every play,” Texas A&M coach Jimbo Fisher said.

OUTKICKING COVERAGE
Waddle had a big day because the Aggies thought they could cover Braden Mann’s booming punts. They were wrong.

Mann averaged 49 yards per kick with a long of 57 and Waddle kept bringing them back the other way to set up the Tide with great field position. Alabama’s scoring drives started on average at the Texas A&M 48.

“Look, people don’t kick the ball to us very much,” Saban said. “These guys have a great punter and everybody asked me about a great punter. My comment was a great punter is good for us because we’ll get some returns on it. And we got some. He kicked it far and we returned it far. That’s the way it goes.”

Alabama also blocked a punt and recovered it for a touchdown in the fourth quarter.

POLL IMPLICATIONS
Alabama likely stays on top. The offense looks like it could win a shootout every week.

Texas A&M likely drops out of the rankings and with three losses already, it could be a while before they return.

STILL PERFECT

Saban is 18-0 when coaching against his former assistants and is 3-0 against Fisher, who was Saban’s offensive coordinator when LSU won the national championship.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
ALA	14	10	10	13	47
TA&M	7	6	7	8	28

Scoring Summary -----			
FIRST QUARTER		ALA	TA&M
TA&M TD 6:57 Kellen Mond 1 Yd Run (Seth Small Kick)			
15 plays, 75 yards, 8:03		0	7
ALA TD 2:41 Jaylen Waddle 31 Yd pass from Tua Tagovailoa (Joseph Bulovas Kick)			
10 plays, 73 yards, 4:16		7	7
ALA TD 0:24 DeVonta Smith 47 Yd pass from Tua Tagovailoa (Joseph Bulovas Kick)			
3 plays, 57 yards, 0:45		14	7
SECOND QUARTER		ALA	TA&M
TA&M FG 12:12 Seth Small 31 Yd Field Goal			
10 plays, 61 yards, 3:12		14	10
ALA FG 8:49 Joseph Bulovas 35 Yd Field Goal			
8 plays, 46 yards, 3:23		17	10
ALA TD 5:28 Najee Harris 16 Yd pass from Tua Tagovailoa (Joseph Bulovas Kick)			
3 plays, 19 yards, 0:49		24	10
TA&M FG 0:00 Seth Small 32 Yd Field Goal			
9 plays, 69 yards, 2:00		24	13
THIRD QUARTER		ALA	TA&M
ALA FG 10:53 Joseph Bulovas 27 Yd Field Goal			
9 plays, 51 yards, 4:07		27	13
ALA TD 7:35 Henry Ruggs III 33 Yd pass from Tua Tagovailoa (Joseph Bulovas Kick)			
5 plays, 55 yards, 1:44		34	13
TA&M TD 5:06 Jalen Wydermyer 25 Yd pass from Kellen Mond (Seth Small Kick)			
6 plays, 82 yards, 2:29		34	20
FOURTH QUARTER		ALA	TA&M
ALA TD 13:02 Brian Robinson Jr. 2 Yd Run (Joseph Bulovas PAT blocked)			
5 plays, 33 yards, 2:03		40	20
ALA TD 11:30 Tyrell Shavers 2 Yd Return of Blocked Punt (Joseph Bulovas Kick)			
3 plays, -1 yard, 1:32		47	20
TA&M TD 8:48 Jalen Wydermyer 18 Yd pass from Kellen Mond (Kellen Mond Run for Two-Point Conversion)			
7 plays, 75 yards, 2:42		47	28

Team Stats	ALA	TA&M
First Downs	25	24
Passes for First	13	13
Rushes for First	11	8
Penalties for First	1	3
Third Down Efficiency	8-13	5-12
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	0-1
Total Yards	448	389
Total Plays	65	70
Avg Gain Per Play	6.9	5.6
Net Yards Rushing	155	125
Rushes	31	28
Yards Per Rush	5.0	4.5
Net Yards Passing	293	264
Comp-Att	21-34	24-42
Yards Per Pass	8.6	6.3
Times Sacked	1	5
Yds Lost To Sacks	-10	-16
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	2	5
Punt Average	29.5	39.8
Penalties	11	5
Penalty Yards	91	55
Fumbles	0	2
Fumbles Lost	0	1
Time of Poss	30:56	29:04

Individual Stats

RUSHING							
ALABAMA	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Najee Harris	20	114	5.7	0	25		
Brian Robinson Jr.	10	51	5.1	1	15		
Tua Tagovailoa	1	-10	-10.0	0	0		
TEXAS A&M	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Kellen Mond	16	90	5.6	1	36		
Isaiah Spiller	10	27	2.7	0	11		
Jacob Kibodi	2	8	4.0	0	5		
PASSING							
ALABAMA	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Tua Tagovailoa	21	34	293	8.6	4	1	85.2
TEXAS A&M	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Kellen Mond	24	42	264	6.3	2	0	52.4
RECEIVING							
ALABAMA	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
DeVonta Smith	7	99	14.1	1	47		
Jerry Jeudy	4	50	12.5	0	26		
Jaylen Waddle	3	48	16.0	1	31		
Henry Ruggs III	1	33	33.0	1	33		
Brian Robinson Jr.	2	33	16.5	0	23		
Najee Harris	3	19	6.3	1	16		
Miller Forristall	1	11	11.0	0	11		
TEXAS A&M	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG		
Quartney Davis	7	81	11.6	0	17		
Jhamon Ausbon	5	60	12.0	0	31		
Jalen Wydermyer	3	49	16.3	2	25		
Isaiah Spiller	5	41	8.2	0	14		
Ainias Smith	2	21	10.5	0	11		
Jacob Kibodi	1	7	7.0	0	7		
Kendrick Rogers	1	5	5.0	0	5		