

WEEK NINE
ILLINOIS at PURDUE

Fighting Illini splash through rain for 24-6 win at Purdue

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. -- Dre Brown kept Illinois grounded Saturday. Cornerback Tony Adams scored all the points the Fighting Illini needed.

That combination helped Illinois mop up at Purdue.

On a soggy afternoon, Brown splashed his way to a career-high 131 yards rushing, Adams returned an interception 13 yards for a touchdown and Illinois pulled away for 24-6 victory to claim the Cannon Trophy for the first time since 2015.

"It's nice to leave the place a little better than we found it," Brown said. "It's such a small cannon but it's cool to celebrate and take pictures with it."

The steadily falling rain chased thousands of fans from their seats at halftime and turned the game into an ugly quagmire.

But there was no dampening this postgame celebration.

The Fighting Illini (4-4, 2/3 Big Ten) continued building momentum following last week's upset over then No. 6 Wisconsin. They've now matched the highest single-season win total in coach Lovie Smith's four-year tenure.

All that was missing -- completing the first shutout in Smith's tenure.

Purdue avoided its first scoreless game since November 2013 by capping a 99-yard fourth-quarter drive with an 11-yard TD pass from backup quarterback Aidan O'Connell to Payne Durham. Otherwise, it was all Illini.

"I thought we'd come ready to play. I'll take the blame for that," Purdue coach Jeff Brohm said after finishing with 271 total yards. "But it was a bad performance. We got exposed in many areas and it's a bad day."

And the Boilermakers never really had a chance.

Brown's 44-yard first-quarter run set up James McCourt for a 38-yard field goal and when Adams jumped the route early in the second quarter, the Illini lead 10-0.

Brohm responded by pulling starting quarterback Jack Plummer for two series and by the time he was back on the field, Brandon Peters had made it 17-0 on a 1-yard TD plunge late in the first half.

Plummer was yanked again after losing a fumble in the third quarter and the 29-yard return Stanley Green allowed the Illini to seal it with 20-yard scoring from Reggie Corbin.

Brown needed only 10 carries in the first half to record the first 100-yard game of his career and Peters threw only six times, completing three for 26 yards.

Plummer was 8 of 20 with 71 yards and the two turnovers.

"We didn't have to look at the past week to get ready for Purdue," Smith said. "They embarrassed us on homecoming last year. Most of our guys were there. The Cannon has been here for a lot of years."

THE TAKEAWAY

Illinois: Smith insisted the Fighting Illini were on the verge of a breakthrough before playing No. 6 Wisconsin last week. Now they've got a signature win -- and momentum. Saturday's victory was Illinois' first road win since Oct. 15, 2016 at Rutgers -- and Smith's first back-to-back conference wins in his four-year tenure.

Purdue: The Boilermakers came into this season with high hopes. But a flurry of injuries derailed their season, and now they must win their final four just to become bowl eligible.

STAT SHEET

Illinois: The Illini have scored three defensive touchdowns this season. ... Peters only threw four passes in the first half with the one completion -- 17 yards to Donny Navarro. ... Corbin ran 12 times for 47 yards and moved into 12th place on the school's career rushing list with 2,211.

Purdue: Zac Collins had seven punts in the first half and finished with eight. ... The Boilermakers had 44 carries for 135 yards, a 3.1 average. King Doerue had 15 carries for 37 yards. ... Freshman receiver David Bell caught five passes for 18 yards and Bryce Hopkins had five receptions for 45 yards before leaving in the fourth quarter with what appeared to be an injured right arm.

QUARTERBACK QUANDARY

Following the game, Brohm questioned Plummer's decision-making and also the early decisions made by O'Connell.

Brohm intends to sort out that situation during practice this week. It's really the only option he has with opening day starter Elijah Sindelar still recovering from a broken left collarbone.

"We've got to be better at that position and we'll have an open competition," he said. "We'll figure it out by the end of the week."

Final	1	2	3	4	T
ILL	3	14	7	0	24
PUR	0	0	0	6	6

Scoring Summary -----

	ILL	PUR
FIRST QUARTER		
ILL FG 2:47 James McCourt 38 Yd Field Goal		
8 plays, 67 yards, 3:30	3	0
SECOND QUARTER		
ILL TD 9:58 Tony Adams 13 Yd Interception Return (James McCourt Kick)	10	0
4 plays, 8 yards, 1:38		
ILL TD 1:41 Brandon Peters 1 Yd Run (James McCourt Kick)	17	0
6 plays, 63 yards, 2:35		
THIRD QUARTER		
ILL TD 2:35 Reggie Corbin 20 Yd Run (James McCourt Kick)	24	0
3 plays, 22 yards, 1:01		
FOURTH QUARTER		
PUR TD 5:49 Payne Durham 11 Yd pass from Aidan O'Connell (Two-Point Pass Conversion Failed)		6
13 plays, 99 yards, 5:05	24	6

Team Stats	ILL	PUR
First Downs	14	17
Passes for First	1	9
Rushes for First	13	8
Penalties for First	0	0
Third Down Efficiency	4-14	5-18
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	1-2
Total Yards	268	271
Total Plays	60	77
Avg Gain Per Play	4.5	3.5
Net Yards Rushing	242	135
Rushes	53	44
Yards Per Rush	4.6	3.1
Net Yards Passing	26	136
Comp-Att	3-7	15-33
Yards Per Pass	3.7	4.1
Times Sacked	2	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-7	-9
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	8	9
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	5	2
Penalty Yards	35	20
Fumbles	1	2
Fumbles Lost	0	1
Time of Poss	32:23	27:37

Individual Stats

RUSHING						
	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG	
ILLINOIS						
Dre Brown	18	131	7.3	0	44	
Ra'Von Bonner	10	48	4.8	0	10	
Reggie Corbin	12	47	3.9	1	20	
Brandon Peters	12	17	1.4	1	10	
Team	1	-1	-1.0	0	0	
PURDUE						
Zander Horvath	9	54	6.0	0	19	
King Doerue	15	37	2.5	0	11	
Tario Fuller	5	19	3.8	0	9	
Jack Plummer	9	18	2.0	0	8	
Aidan O'Connell	1	2	2.0	0	2	
Milton Wright	1	2	2.0	0	2	
Jackson Anthrop	3	2	0.7	0	5	
David Bell	1	1	1.0	0	1	

PASSING							
	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
ILLINOIS							
Brandon Peters	3	6	26	4.3	0	0	--
Casey Washington	0	1	0	0.0	0	0	--
PURDUE							
Jack Plummer	8	20	71	3.6	0	1	6.5
Aidan O'Connell	7	13	65	5.0	1	0	--

RECEIVING						
	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG	
ILLINOIS						
Donny Navarro	1	17	17.0	0	17	
Justice Williams	1	8	8.0	0	8	
Caleb Reams	1	1	1.0	0	1	
PURDUE						
Jackson Anthrop	3	51	17.0	0	22	
Brycen Hopkins	5	45	9.0	0	20	
David Bell	5	18	3.6	0	7	
Payne Durham	1	11	11.0	1	11	
Milton Wright	1	11	11.0	0	11	