

WEEK TEN
PITTSBURGH at GEORGIA TECH

Pitt overcomes 3 turnovers, beats Georgia Tech 20-10

ATLANTA -- The ACC's best run defense created the play of the game for Pittsburgh.

That defense also has the Panthers in position to contend for another shot at the Atlantic Coast Conference championship.

Kylan Johnson's goal-line hit late in the third quarter forced a fumble, protecting Pitt's lead, and the Panthers rode their dominant defense to a 20-10 win over Georgia Tech on Saturday.

Pitt (6-3, 3-2 Atlantic Coast Conference) held Georgia Tech (2-6, 1-4) to 194 yards. "They played another outstanding game," said Pitt coach Pat Narduzzi of his defense. "You win championships with defense."

Entering the game, The Panthers led the ACC with an average of 85.9 yards rushing allowed per game. They held the Yellow Jackets to 86 yards.

Pitt, the defending Coastal Division champion, became bowl-eligible.

Pitt led 17-10 when Georgia Tech drove for a potential tying score in the third quarter.

Johnson's hit on Georgia Tech quarterback Lucas Johnson stopped the Yellow Jackets inches short of the goal line, forcing the fumble. Cam Bright returned the recovery 79 yards.

"I saw an open lane in front of me, so I just tried to scoop and score," Bright said.

The play set up Alex Kessman's 49-yard field goal. Instead of a tie, Pitt led by 10 points.

"It was a game-changer," said Kylan Johnson, who said he was fine after suffering what he described as a shoulder stinger on the big hit. Lucas Johnson also was shaken up on the play.

Kenny Pickett threw for 204 yards with a touchdown and two interceptions and Vincent Davis had a 61-yard touchdown run on a wildcat play.

Davis ran through the middle of the line and made one cut to his left before finding open field for a 61-yard touchdown run to give Pitt a 10-0 lead in the first quarter.

Pickett's 21-yard touchdown pass to Shocky Jacques-Louis in the second quarter stretched the halftime lead to 17-7.

Pitt overcame three first-half turnovers.

In the first quarter, safety Juanyeh Thomas cut in front of Maurice Ffrench for Georgia Tech's first interception. Pickett's pass off the hands of tight end Nakia Griffin-Stewart was intercepted by Tariq Carpenter later in the first quarter.

Georgia Tech couldn't convert either interception into points but quickly capitalized when Ffrench's fumble, forced by linebacker David Curry, was recovered by Jordan Domineck. On the next play, James Graham threw a 51-yard touchdown pass to Ahmarean Brown.

After Graham completed only 2 of 9 passes for 54 yards in the first half, coach Geoff Collins started Lucas Johnson at quarterback in the second half. Graham returned after Johnson was escorted to the locker room following the big hit on his fumble at the goal line.

"Obviously, we would want to have that play back," Collins said, adding there were other key plays "when you're talking about a game with that small margin for error."

Ffrench had 11 catches for 71 yards.

THE TAKEAWAY

Pitt: The Panthers rebounded from last week's loss to Miami, finding a way to win with defense despite the turnovers and other blemishes. Pitt struggled on special teams, including a questionable decision by Ffrench to field a kickoff near the sideline at the 7.

Georgia Tech: The two quarterbacks combined to complete only 8 of 21 passes for 108 yards. Graham, a redshirt freshman, made an ill-advised deep pass in the fourth quarter that was intercepted by Paris Ford. After running for 141 yards in a win at Miami two weeks ago, Jordan Mason had 15 carries for 56 yards.

EJECTED

Panthers linebacker Phil Campbell III was ejected in the second quarter after a targeting call for his helmet-to-helmet hit on Graham.

ANOTHER BLOCK

Georgia Tech's Jerry Howard blocked Kirk Christodoulou's punt on Pitt's first possession of the second half. The Yellow Jackets recovered at the Pitt 12, setting up a 30-yard field goal by Brenton King that cut the Panthers' lead to seven points.

It was Howard's second block of the season. "I just used speed to go outside and cut back inside and block the punt," he said.

SHORT-HANDED

Pitt sophomore running back Todd Sibley, the team's second-leading rusher, was held out with an undisclosed injury. Narduzzi said free safety Damar Hamlin, also held out, could have played if needed.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
PITT	10	7	0	3	20
GT	0	7	3	0	10

Scoring Summary -----

	PITT	GT
FIRST QUARTER		
PITT FG 11:14 Alex Kessman 32 Yd Field Goal		
10 plays, 62 yards, 3:40	3	0
PITT TD 6:25 Vincent Davis 61 Yd Run (Alex Kessman Kick)		
1 play, 61 yards, 0:11	10	0
SECOND QUARTER		
GT TD 13:24 Ahmarean Brown 51 Yd pass from James Graham (Brenton King Kick)		
1 play, 51 yards, 0:08	10	7
PITT TD 9:34 Shocky Jacques-Louis 21 Yd pass from Kenny Pickett (Alex Kessman Kick)		
8 plays, 65 yards, 3:50	17	7
THIRD QUARTER		
GT FG 9:46 Brenton King 30 Yd Field Goal		
4 plays, -1 yard, 1:30	17	10
FOURTH QUARTER		
PITT FG 14:54 Alex Kessman 49 Yd Field Goal		
4 plays, -10 yards, 1:48	20	10

Team Stats	PITT	GT
First Downs	18	10
Passes for First	10	4
Rushes for First	8	3
Penalties for First	0	3
Third Down Efficiency	7-16	2-13
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	0-0
Total Yards	362	194
Total Plays	70	50
Avg Gain Per Play	5.2	3.9
Net Yards Rushing	158	86
Rushes	36	29
Yards Per Rush	4.4	3.0
Net Yards Passing	204	108
Comp-Att	25-34	8-21
Yards Per Pass	6.0	5.1
Times Sacked	2	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-8	-7
Interceptions	2	1
Punts	4	8
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	6	4
Penalty Yards	50	38
Fumbles	2	1
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Time of Poss	35:17	24:43

Individual Stats

RUSHING									
	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG				
PITTSBURGH									
A.J. Davis	16	75	4.7	0	9				
Vincent Davis	6	67	11.2	1	61				
V'Lique Carter	4	14	3.5	0	7				
Kenny Pickett	6	8	1.3	0	9				
Maurice Ffrench	1	0	0.0	0	0				
Team	1	-1	-1.0	0	0				
Shocky Jacques-Louis	1	-1	-1.0	0	0				
Aaron Mathews	1	-4	-4.0	0	0				
GEORGIA TECH									
Jordan Mason	15	56	3.7	0	18				
James Graham	8	30	3.8	0	12				
Lucas Johnson	5	1	0.2	0	3				
Jerry Howard Jr.	1	-1	-1.0	0	0				
PASSING									
	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat		
PITTSBURGH									
Kenny Pickett	25	34	204	6.0	1	2	43.5		
GEORGIA TECH									
James Graham	3	13	57	4.4	1	1	9.6		
Lucas Johnson	5	8	51	6.4	0	0	11.4		
RECEIVING									
	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG				
PITTSBURGH									
Maurice Ffrench	11	71	6.5	0	17				
Taysir Mack	5	47	9.4	0	23				
Shocky Jacques-Louis	3	38	12.7	1	21				
Nakia Griffin-Stewart	2	21	10.5	0	12				
V'Lique Carter	3	19	6.3	0	13				
Will Gragg	1	8	8.0	0	8				
GEORGIA TECH									
Ahmarean Brown	4	61	15.3	1	51				
Adonias Sanders	1	15	15.0	0	15				
Nathan Cottrell	1	14	14.0	0	14				
Tyler Davis	1	10	10.0	0	10				
Tobias Oliver	1	8	8.0	0	8				