

WEEK TEN
EAST CAROLINA at SMU

No. 23 SMU bounces back, tops ECU 59-51 in another shootout

DALLAS -- Shane Buechele threw five touchdown passes, Xavier Jones broke one of Eric Dickerson's school records and No. 23 SMU bounced back from a first loss that changed the course of its season by outscoring East Carolina 59-51 on Saturday.

The Mustangs (9-1, 5-1 American Athletic) played from ahead and kept it that way in a second straight game with more than 1,000 combined yards. SMU had fallen behind and failed to close the gap last week in a 54-48 loss to No. 19 Memphis.

Tight end Kylan Granson caught three touchdowns, including a 31-yarder on fourth-and-20 with SMU leading 45-44 midway through the fourth quarter. Granson had 138 yards on seven receptions, while James Proche finished with 14 catches for 167 yards.

"We've got a great quarterback, we've got great skill players, we've got great tight ends," said Granson, who had career highs for yards and TDs. "The fact that he was willing to go for a fourth-and-long like that, I feel a little big for my boots. He trusted me."

On the ensuing kickoff, East Carolina's Jsi Hatfield couldn't pick up the loose ball around his 15-yard line and SMU recovered. That led to Proche's second touchdown catch.

Proche, a senior, had broken Emmanuel Sanders' school record with his 35th career touchdown catch on his first score of the day.

Buechele threw for 414 yards as the Mustangs finished with 636 total yards to 644 for the Pirates (3-7, 0-6).

Jones, who ran for 157 yards, had three rushing touchdowns for the third time this season, giving him 18. His total touchdowns reached 20, one more than the Pro Football Hall of Famer Dickerson had in 1981 -- all on the ground.

SMU started 8-0 for the first time since Dickerson was leading the Pony Express in his final season in 1982. But the loss to Memphis left the Mustangs needing help to reach the AAC championship game even if they win their final two regular-season games.

"Our guys showed up on Sunday and had the exact frame of mind we wanted them to have," coach Sonny Dykes said. "We didn't have to beg them to practice. They showed up and handled their business."

East Carolina's Tyler Snead caught 19 passes for 240 yards, both career highs. Snead's previous best was six catches, and at one point he caught seven straight passes from Holton Ahlers. The Football Bowl Subdivision high for receptions in a game this season coming in was 16.

Ahlers threw for 498 yards a week after setting a school record with 535 yards when the Pirates lost to No. 17 Cincinnati 46-43 on a field goal on the final play.

"I hurt for our kids because they fight," coach Mike Houston said. "I'm just really, really, I'm hurting for them. They're fighters. They're winners. And it's only a matter of time."

THE TAKEAWAY

East Carolina: When his first season is over, Houston could easily point to this two-week stretch as the most significant progress for a program with a 4-26 conference record going back to 2016. The Pirates showed well against consecutive Top 25 opponents.

SMU: Defense is suddenly an issue for the Mustangs, who have allowed at least 500 yards four times in five games after posting mostly respectable numbers early in the season.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
ECU	7	13	17	14	51
SMU	14	14	17	14	59

Scoring Summary -----

	ECU	SMU
FIRST QUARTER		
SMU TD 12:44 Kylan Granson 22 Yd pass from Shane Buechele (Kevin Robledo Kick)		7
8 plays, 75 yards, 2:16	0	7
ECU TD 7:20 Jsi Hatfield 68 Yd pass from Holton Ahlers (Jake Verity Kick)		7
3 plays, 70 yards, 0:42	7	7
SMU TD 3:51 Kylan Granson 4 Yd pass from Shane Buechele (Kevin Robledo Kick)		7
9 plays, 75 yards, 3:29	7	14
SECOND QUARTER		
ECU FG 11:06 Jake Verity 38 Yd Field Goal		
9 plays, 34 yards, 3:39	10	14
SMU TD 7:28 Xavier Jones 3 Yd Run (Kevin Robledo Kick)		10
11 plays, 75 yards, 3:38	10	21
SMU TD 4:45 James Proche 51 Yd pass from Shane Buechele (Kevin Robledo Kick)		28
3 plays, 66 yards, 1:02	10	28
ECU TD 2:04 Tyler Snead 36 Yd pass from Holton Ahlers (Jake Verity Kick)		28
6 plays, 73 yards, 2:37	17	28
ECU FG 0:00 Jake Verity 37 Yd Field Goal		
7 plays, 60 yards, 1:00	20	28
THIRD QUARTER		
ECU TD 13:53 Zech Byrd 45 Yd pass from Holton Ahlers (Jake Verity Kick)		28
3 plays, 75 yards, 1:07	27	28
SMU TD 12:01 Xavier Jones 35 Yd Run (Kevin Robledo Kick)		35
7 plays, 75 yards, 1:52	27	35
ECU TD 8:06 Tyler Snead 47 Yd pass from Holton Ahlers (Jake Verity Kick)		35
8 plays, 75 yards, 3:55	34	35
SMU FG 5:34 Kevin Robledo 23 Yd Field Goal		
7 plays, 47 yards, 2:22	34	38
ECU FG 1:56 Jake Verity 41 Yd Field Goal		
10 plays, 51 yards, 3:38	37	38
SMU TD 0:19 Xavier Jones 64 Yd Run (Kevin Robledo Kick)		45
4 plays, 75 yards, 1:29	37	45
FOURTH QUARTER		
ECU TD 10:58 Tyler Snead 57 Yd pass from Holton Ahlers (Jake Verity Kick)		45
10 plays, 97 yards, 4:20	44	45
SMU TD 7:25 Kylan Granson 31 Yd pass from Shane Buechele (Kevin Robledo Kick)		52
9 plays, 75 yards, 3:40	44	52
SMU TD 4:18 James Proche 3 Yd pass from Shane Buechele (Kevin Robledo Kick)		59
6 plays, 22 yards, 3:00	44	59
ECU TD 1:55 Audie Omotosho 22 Yd pass from Holton Ahlers (Jake Verity Kick)		59
8 plays, 72 yards, 2:16	51	59

Team Stats	ECU	SMU
First Downs	27	33
Passes for First	18	23
Rushes for First	9	9
Penalties for First	0	1
Third Down Efficiency	9-16	5-14
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-1	5-5
Total Yards	644	636
Total Plays	77	83
Avg Gain Per Play	8.4	7.7
Net Yards Rushing	146	222
Rushes	35	37
Yards Per Rush	4.2	6.0
Net Yards Passing	498	414
Comp-Att	32-42	33-46
Yards Per Pass	11.9	9.0
Times Sacked	2	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-22	-8
Interceptions	0	1
Punts	4	3
Punt Average	42.0	37.0
Penalties	1	3
Penalty Yards	15	9
Fumbles	2	0
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Time of Poss	31:05	28:55

Individual Stats

RUSHING

EAST CAROLINA	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Tay Williams	14	61	4.4	0	14
Demetrius Mauney	8	43	5.4	0	32
Holton Ahlers	8	25	3.1	0	11
Jsi Hatfield	2	13	6.5	0	12
Trace Christian	3	4	1.3	0	2
SMU	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Xavier Jones	20	157	7.9	3	64
Ke'Mon Freeman	8	45	5.6	0	21
Shane Buechele	6	11	1.8	0	8
Kylan Granson	1	9	9.0	0	9
James Proche	1	2	2.0	0	2
Team	1	-2	-2.0	0	0

PASSING

EAST CAROLINA	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Holton Ahlers	32/42	498	11.9	6	0	96.5	
SMU	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Shane Buechele	33/46	414	9.0	5	1	89.4	

RECEIVING

EAST CAROLINA	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Tyler Snead	19	240	12.6	3	57
Audie Omotosho	4	77	19.3	1	29
Jsi Hatfield	1	68	68.0	1	68
Blake Proehl	4	51	12.8	0	21
Zech Byrd	1	45	45.0	1	45
Tay Williams	2	9	4.5	0	5
Deondre Farrier	1	8	8.0	0	8
SMU	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
James Proche	14	167	11.9	2	51
Kylan Granson	7	138	19.7	3	36
Rashee Rice	4	40	10.0	0	20
Tyler Page	3	20	6.7	0	9
Xavier Jones	2	15	7.5	0	12
Calvin Wiggins	1	13	13.0	0	13
CJ Sanders	1	12	12.0	0	12
Ke'Mon Freeman	1	9	9.0	0	9