

**No. 17 Cincinnati rallies to beat South Florida 20-17**

TAMPA, Fla. -- No. 17 Cincinnati's latest fourth-quarter comeback had a familiar ending.

Sam Crosa kicked a 37-yarder field goal as time expired Saturday night, giving the Bearcats a 20-17 victory over South Florida and at least a share of the American Athletic Conference East division title.

It was Crosa's second field goal of the game, as well as the second winning kick with no time remaining in the past three weeks.

"It's a feeling I really can't describe ... a really, really good feeling. That's all I can say," said Crosa, who also booted a 32-yarder to keep the Bearcats unbeaten in conference play two weeks ago at East Carolina.

Teammates rushed from the sideline in celebration, and the party extended to the locker room.

"Just like after ECU, another big win for us. The whole team just really coming together and doing their job in the second half," Crosa said. "I'm just happy I can do my part a little bit and the get job done for us."

The Bearcats (8-1, 6-0, No. 17 CFP) rallied from a 10-point half-time deficit to win for the eighth straight time, getting touchdown runs from Michael Warren and Gerrid Doaks before Desmond Ridder led an 11-play, 60-yard drive to win the game.

USF's Spencer Shrader missed a 33-yard field goal that would have given the Bulls (4-6, 2-4) the lead with 2:07 remaining. The freshman's fourth miss of the night hit the right upright and bounced away.

"There's no blame for anyone," Bulls coach Charlie Strong said. It's just one of those losses that's a team loss."

Ridder was just 9 of 18 passing for 78 yards, but he had a pair of big third-down completions on the winning march -- the last a short flip to Warren, who rambled 30 yards to the USF 40. Warren ran for 11 yards on the play and finished with 134 yards rushing on 26 carries.

Jordan McCloud threw for 267 yards and one touchdown for USF, which led 10-0 at halftime. The Bulls clung to a 17-10 advantage entering the fourth quarter, but couldn't put the Bearcats away.

Cincinnati pulled even on Warren's 2-yard TD run with 14:26 to go, but wasted an opportunity to pull away from the 17-17 when a holding penalty nullified Doaks' 50-yard run to the USF 1.

"It's unbelievable, that group of guys in there," Cincinnati coach Luke Fickell said. "When you can go out there and not have your best, meaning the first half just not playing, nothing clicking. To find a way on the road ... we needed to find a way to all pull together. When those guys believe in each other, they're very hard to beat."

Cincinnati rushed for 200 yards, 169 in the second half.

The Bearcats, who rallied from a 12-point fourth-quarter deficit to beat East Carolina 46-43, have had a penchant for performing up or down to the level of opponents this season -- struggling against weaker conference foes they figured to dominate while playing their best in games considered to be tougher matchups.

This one was ugly from the start, with Cincinnati's offense helping to dig an early hole with three false starts and a delay of game penalty, and the defense giving up a 55-yard pass play that set up South Florida first touchdown. If not for an offensive pass interference call that wiped out Bryce Miller's 22-yard TD catch and Shrader missing field goals of 50, 53 and 43 yards in the second quarter, the Bearcats' 10-point halftime deficit would have been larger.

"Every loss hurts, no matter the score. This one hurts really bad because we thought we had them," McCloud said.

"Cincinnati being ranked as high as they are, we feel like we can play with everybody," the freshman quarterback added. "We know when we play our best that we can compete vs. any team, especially in our conference."

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Cincinnati: A week after scoring on seven of their first eight possessions to roll to a 38-0 halftime lead against UConn, the Bearcats were limited to 46 yards on 27 plays in the first two quarters. They were shut out in the first half for the first time since Week 2, when they were beaten 42-0 at Ohio State.

South Florida: The Bulls have rebounded from a 1/3 start to climb within striking distance of bowl eligibility. To get to six wins, they'll have to upset No. 18 Memphis at home next week and then go on the road and defeat UCF in the regular season finale.

**POLL IMPLICATIONS**

The Bearcats are the highest-ranked Group of Five team in the nation, which has them in a prime position to earn a spot in a New Year's Six bowl.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
CIN	0	0	10	10	20
USF	7	3	7	0	17

**Scoring Summary -----**

	CIN	USF
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
USF TD 10:25 Trevon Sands 4 Yd Run (Spencer Shrader Kick)	0	7
5 plays, 71 yards, 1:47		
<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>		
USF FG 9:24 Spencer Shrader 28 Yd Field Goal	0	10
13 plays, 85 yards, 5:25		
<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>		
CIN TD 9:50 Gerrid Doaks 1 Yd Run (Sam Crosa Kick)	7	10
10 plays, 56 yards, 3:55		
USF TD 7:12 Mitchell Wilcox 4 Yd pass from Jordan McCloud (Spencer Shrader Kick)	7	17
7 plays, 75 yards, 2:38		
CIN FG 3:47 Sam Crosa 41 Yd Field Goal	10	17
8 plays, 25 yards, 3:25		
<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>		
CIN TD 14:26 Michael Warren II 2 Yd Run (Sam Crosa Kick)	17	17
5 plays, 65 yards, 2:00		
CIN FG 0:00 Sam Crosa 37 Yd Field Goal	20	17
11 plays, 60 yards, 2:07		

Team Stats	CIN	USF
First Downs	15	18
Passes for First	4	7
Rushes for First	11	11
Penalties for First	0	0
Third Down Efficiency	4-14	8-17
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-0	0-0
Total Yards	278	438
Total Plays	66	74
Avg Gain Per Play	4.2	5.9
Net Yards Rushing	200	171
Rushes	48	47
Yards Per Rush	4.2	3.6
Net Yards Passing	78	267
Comp-Att	9-18	18-27
Yards Per Pass	4.3	9.9
Times Sacked	4	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-22	-12
Interceptions	0	0
Punts	8	5
Punt Average	40.4	40.8
Penalties	10	6
Penalty Yards	62	55
Fumbles	2	2
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Time of Poss	28:04	31:56

**Individual Stats**

RUSHING					
CINCINNATI	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Michael Warren II	26	134	5.2	1	35
Gerrid Doaks	10	48	4.8	1	11
Desmond Ridder	12	18	1.5	0	20
USF	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Jordan Cronkrite	20	78	3.9	0	8
Kelley Joiner Jr.	13	72	5.5	0	14
Jordan McCloud	10	13	1.3	0	8
Trevon Sands	4	8	2.0	1	4

PASSING							
CINCINNATI	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Desmond Ridder	9	18	78	4.3	0	0	25.6
USF	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Jordan McCloud	18	27	267	9.9	1	0	50.2

RECEIVING					
CINCINNATI	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Michael Warren II	2	30	15.0	0	30
Malick Mbodj	2	22	11.0	0	11
Gerrid Doaks	2	16	8.0	0	9
Josiah Deguara	2	10	5.0	0	6
Jayshon Jackson	1	0	0.0	0	0
USF	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG
Randall St. Felix	2	70	35.0	0	55
Eddie McDoom	3	53	17.7	0	41
Kelley Joiner Jr.	1	49	49.0	0	49
Xavier Weaver	2	39	19.5	0	37
Mitchell Wilcox	5	29	5.8	1	8
Bryce Miller	2	23	11.5	0	19
Jacob Mathis	1	7	7.0	0	7
Jordan Cronkrite	2	-3	-1.5	0	1