

WEEK THIRTEEN
TEMPLE at CINCINNATI

No. 17 Cincinnati beats Temple 15-13 for AAC title berth

CINCINNATI -- A blocked extra-point attempt turned into Cincinnati's decisive points. In a season full of close escapes, this one was the most unusual.

And the most meaningful, too. The Bearcats' year of living dangerously has culminated in the American Athletic title game.

Michael Warren II ran 13 yards for a touchdown on a cold, raw Saturday night, Coby Bryant went 98 yards with a blocked extra-point attempt and No. 17 Cincinnati held on for a 15-13 victory over Temple that clinched a spot in the league's championship game.

The Bearcats (10-1, 7-0) secured the AAC East title and remained the only unbeaten team in league play. They would host the title game if they win next week at No. 18 Memphis (10-1, 6-1), which shares the AAC West lead.

Of course, it didn't come easy. With these 'Cats, it never does.

"Well, I don't know where to start," coach Luke Fickell said. "Another one that some way, somehow, we found a way. We showed the resiliency to get it done and found a new way tonight."

Temple (7-4, 4-3) had won four straight against Cincinnati with its dominant defense, but couldn't get enough out of its offense until too late on a windy, rainy night with temperatures in the 30s and snow falling in the closing minutes. Receivers from both teams had trouble catching the ball, leaving it to the running games and special teams to decide matters.

Cincinnati got the better of it both ways.

In addition to Warren's touchdown, the Bearcats blocked the extra-point try after Re'Mahn Davis' touchdown run in the fourth quarter. Bryant gathered the ball at the right sideline, ran across the field and went untouched for two points and a 15-6 lead.

"It was amazing!" linebacker Perry Young said. "You just love to see that."

Anthony Russo's 16-yard touchdown pass cut it to 15-13 with 6:33 left, but his interception with 1:19 left closed it out. Russo finished 24 of 43 for 228 yards.

Warren finished with 106 yards rushing. Desmond Ridder played despite a sore passing shoulder that kept him out of practice early in the week and was only 9 of 25 for 62 yards.

"Des was banged up and wasn't able to go most of the week," Fickell said. "As the week progressed, Des showed us something. He said he could do it, he said he could go."

The Bearcats led 6-0 at halftime on Sam Crosa's field goals of 36 and 37 yards, the latter set up by another weird special teams play. Temple punter Adam Barry put his right knee on the ground while fielding a low snap, turning the ball over at the 6. Ridder was sacked on first down, and the Bearcats settled for a field goal.

It was the second straight game that Cincinnati failed to get into the end zone in the opening half. They trailed 10-0 at South Florida before rallying for a 20-17 win on Crosa's field goal on the last play.

Temple missed a field goal attempt and was stopped on fourth-and-1 from the Cincinnati 18-yard line in the second half as the Owls were eliminated from the division race.

"We've still got a lot left to play for this season," coach Rod Carey said. "Eight wins is a big deal, and we've got a bowl yet. When you look at it holistically, we're growing this program. That's what I told them."

BIG PICTURE

Temple: The Owls came in second-to-last in the AAC in rushing and lost five yards on the ground in the first half. Jager Gardner failed to get a first down on fourth-and-1 from the Cincinnati 18 in the second half.

Cincinnati: The Bearcats have struggled offensively in their last two games, a major concern heading into the final week of the regular season. The passing game failing to get into a rhythm for the second straight game. In the last two games, Ridder is 18 of 43 for 140 yards.

SEEING BLUE

Temple's Jadan Blue set the Temple single-season record with 80 catches, topping Zamir Cobb's mark of 74 in 2003. Blue has 923 yards receiving. He finished with 13 catches for 120 yards, his third straight game with at least 10 catches and 100 yards.

FLAGS GALORE

Cincinnati was penalized nine times for 74 yards, including personal fouls for roughing the passer and a horse-collar tackle. The Bearcats lead the FBS in penalties.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
TEM	0	0	0	13	13
CIN	0	6	7	2	15

Scoring Summary -----

	TEM	CIN
SECOND QUARTER		
CIN FG 13:14 Sam Crosa 36 Yd Field Goal		3
16 plays, 65 yards, 4:13	0	
CIN FG 0:30 Sam Crosa 37 Yd Field Goal		6
4 plays, -14 yards, 0:39	0	
THIRD QUARTER		
CIN TD 10:47 Michael Warren II 13 Yd Run (Sam Crosa Kick)		13
9 plays, 65 yards, 4:13	0	
FOURTH QUARTER		
TEM TD 11:19 Re'Mahn Davis 7 Yd Run (Will Mobley PAT blocked)		13
10 plays, 73 yards, 3:30	6	
CIN D2P 11:19 Coby Bryant Defensive PAT Conversion		15
10 plays, 73 yards, 3:30	6	
TEM TD 6:59 Kenny Yeboah 16 Yd pass from Anthony Russo (Will Mobley Kick)		15
7 plays, 65 yards, 2:15	13	

Team Stats	TEM	CIN
First Downs	20	14
Passes for First	13	2
Rushes for First	4	11
Penalties for First	3	1
Third Down Efficiency	7-17	6-18
Fourth Down Efficiency	1-4	1-1
Total Yards	310	210
Total Plays	74	69
Avg Gain Per Play	4.2	3.0
Net Yards Rushing	78	148
Rushes	29	44
Yards Per Rush	2.7	3.4
Net Yards Passing	232	62
Comp-Att	25-45	9-25
Yards Per Pass	5.2	2.5
Times Sacked	1	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-3	-26
Interceptions	1	1
Punts	5	7
Punt Average	36.8	44.6
Penalties	6	9
Penalty Yards	39	74
Fumbles	3	1
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Time of Poss		

Individual Stats

RUSHING						
TEAM	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG	
Re'Mahn Davis	13	71	5.5	1	14	
Jager Gardner	10	24	2.4	0	9	
Todd Centeio	1	-1	-1.0	0	0	
Anthony Russo	4	-3	-0.8	0	6	
Team	1	-13	-13.0	0	0	
CINCINNATI						
	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG	
Michael Warren II	24	106	4.4	1	18	
Gerrid Doaks	7	37	5.3	0	14	
Tre Tucker	1	15	15.0	0	15	
Desmond Ridder	9	-3	-0.3	0	9	
Team	3	-7	-2.3	0	0	

PASSING							
TEAM	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Anthony Russo	24	43	228	5.3	1	1	39.0
Todd Centeio	1	2	4	2.0	0	0	1.9
CINCINNATI							
	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Desmond Ridder	9	25	62	2.5	0	1	9.6

RECEIVING						
TEAM	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG	
Jadan Blue	13	120	9.2	0	24	
Jose Barbon	2	28	14.0	0	20	
Re'Mahn Davis	3	27	9.0	0	23	
Branden Mack	2	17	8.5	0	9	
Kenny Yeboah	1	16	16.0	1	16	
David Martin-Robinson	1	12	12.0	0	12	
Isaiah Wright	3	12	4.0	0	6	
CINCINNATI						
	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	LONG	
Rashad Medaris	2	19	9.5	0	10	
Malick Mbodj	2	16	8.0	0	9	
Alec Pierce	2	16	8.0	0	10	
Tre Tucker	2	6	3.0	0	3	
Gerrid Doaks	1	5	5.0	0	5	