

College Football Saturday

Cowboys run out of gas as Sooners turn up heat

STILLWATER, Okla. (AP) — Now it's up to voters and computers.

Sam Bradford threw for 370 yards and four touchdowns, and No. 3 Oklahoma based its case for a BCS bump on its high-powered offense, outscoring No. 11 Oklahoma State 61-41 Saturday night in the highest-scoring Bedlam rivalry game in the century-old series.

Needing to make up a minuscule eight-thousandths of a point to second-place Texas in the Bowl Championship Series standings to earn a spot in next week's Big 12 championship game, the Sooners (11-1, 7-1) relied on the Heisman-caliber arm of Bradford.

He completed 30 of 44 passes and also scored on a 1-yard touchdown run, leading Oklahoma to its fourth straight 60-point game.

The Sooners' defense, which had been improving and made a statement in last week's 65-21 rout of then-No. 2 Texas Tech had few answers for quarterback Zac Robinson and the Cowboys — but it was enough.

Robinson threw for 254 yards and three touchdowns and ran for another score, but never could guide Cowboys (9-3, 5-3) into the lead after half-time.

A two-section wide swath of crimson-clad Sooners fans started chanting "B-C-S" during a timeout with 32 seconds left and the game finally in hand, and Chris Brown scored on a 28-yard run on the next play to add an exclamation



Brody Schmidt - AP

Oklahoma State defensive back Perrish Cox, left, and Oklahoma tight end Jermaine Gresham battle for the ball during the third quarter Saturday in Stillwater, Okla.

point.

Whether those fans' wishes will be granted is still up in the air. The BCS standings will be released Sunday, establishing who comes out ahead in a three-way tie between Oklahoma, Texas and Texas

Tech in the Big 12 South standings and also who gets a leg up in the national championship race.

One team will get a trip to Kansas City, Mo., to face North champion Missouri and either bolster its case for the

BCS title game or suffer a deflating defeat — and open the door for the team that loses out in the division race to possibly play for the national title.

"There's plenty of reasons for us, as there are for other people," coach Bob Stoops said. "Our argument's just stated here again today, what we've done here down the stretch. It will be what it'll be."

A group of Texas fans pulled out all the stops to try to keep the Longhorns in the coveted No. 2 spot, handing out thousands of signs printed with the score from their win against Oklahoma earlier this year — 45-35.

Longhorns coach Mack Brown was even pleading his case in a telephone interview with television announcers while Oklahoma was making its case on the field.

Brown suggested that the Southeastern Conference's tiebreaker scenario was better than the Big 12's because it adds another dimension to the BCS standings: If the top two teams in a three-team tiebreaker are separated by five or fewer spots in the BCS, the winner of a head-to-head meeting would play for the conference title.

Of course, that would benefit Texas. But that's not the way his conference breaks its ties.

"Everything we did tonight kind of says why we should be there. It's out of our hands now," Bradford said. "We'll see how it ends up."

Regional Round-Up

Texas Tech overcomes scrappy Baylor, 35-28

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) — Mike Leach had a novel idea about how to break a possible three-way tie in the Big 12 South following No. 7 Texas Tech's 35-28 win against Baylor.

Forget the BCS and head-to-head matchups. Go to the report cards, Leach suggested.

They are STUDENT-athletes. "I think they should break that three-way tie based on a graduation rate. I think the Big 12 conference should have an executive session tonight," the Texas Tech coach said Saturday. "And I think when they do that they will find that no one's more deserving than the Red Raiders to win Big 12 South."

Tech last month announced that an NCAA report showed its football team had a graduation rate of 79 percent to lead the Big 12. The NCAA report showed the football rate for Texas at 50 percent and Oklahoma at 46 percent—at the bottom of the Big 12.

The Red Raiders are really good on the field, too. Graham Harrell capped a 21-point rally for Texas Tech with a touchdown pass midway through the fourth quarter and the Red Raiders kept their hopes for a Big 12 South title alive with the victory. Harrell injured two fingers on his left hand in the second quarter and is scheduled for surgery Sunday. The injury will not keep him from playing next week, if the Red Raiders have a game.

The Red Raiders would face Missouri in the conference championship next week if No. 3 Oklahoma loses to 11th-ranked Oklahoma State later Saturday.

"We wish them nothing but the best," Leach said of the Cowboys game against the Sooners. "We'd like to go to Kansas City, no question about that."

A win by the Sooners creates a three-way tie for the Big 12 South with Texas and Texas Tech, leaving it to Sunday's BCS standings to determine which team will play the Tigers in Kansas City, Mo. The Red Raiders have little hope of coming out on top in that scenario.

Texas Tech (11-1, 7-1) won 11 games in a season for the third time in the program's 84 years. But if things don't fall right, the Red Raiders reward could be nothing more than a Cotton Bowl bid, left out of the BCS in favor of the Longhorns and Sooners.

Texas needed a Baylor victory to clinch the division title, and for a while the Bears must have had the Longhorns pumped up.

Tech looked flat a week after the Sooners beat them 65-21, ending the Red Raiders' perfect season.

"That first half was one to not be proud of and the second half was one to be incredibly proud of," Leach said. "I think key leaders, like Graham Harrell, were instrumental to playing the way we did in the second half."

The Bears led 21-14 at halftime, and scored on their opening possession of the second half with Jacoby Jones capping a 78-yard drive on a 1-yard touchdown run to make it 28-14.

Texas Tech took control from there—without All-American Michael Crabtree, who left with a right foot injury midway through the second quarter and did not return.

The Red Raiders got a 1-yard TD run by Shannon Woods, a 3-yard touchdown run by Baron Batch and a Harrell's 4-yard touchdown pass to Detron Lewis to go up 35-28.

Lewis' touchdown came after Tech linebacker Brian Duncan intercepted a pass by Robert Griffin on Baylor's 40.

"You can't continually stop them," first-year Baylor coach Art Briles said. "Name me someone that has in the last 55 ball games, maybe one or two games."

Harrell was 41-of-50 for two touchdowns and 309 yards. He was intercepted once and fumbled once.

"We came out flat and I think they came out excited, and when that happens, you'll get beat," he said. "Luckily we were able to come into the locker room, get excited at halftime, go back out there and play really well in the second half."

Griffin completed 12 of 15 for 91 yards and one touchdown. He ran for 105 yards and scored two rushing touchdowns.

Baylor (4-8, 2-6) started strong and took the lead into halftime after a fumble by Harrell deep in his own territory. Bears defensive end Leon Freeman stripped the ball as the senior quarterback pulled his arm back to pass.

Vincent Rhodes recovered it at the Tech 16 but the Bears nearly lost their scoring opportunity chance five plays later when officials ruled Griffin fumbled into the end zone as he tried to reach the ball over the goal line for a score.

Several players scrambled for the ball which eventually went out of bounds, apparently for a touchback. A review showed Griffin's knee was down before he lost the ball and the Bears retained possession.

On the next play, Griffin lobbed a pass over defenders into the arms of Earnest Smith to go up 21-14 at the break.

Baylor now has lost 32 consecutive games against AP Top 10 teams since a 20-13 win at Southern California on Sept. 21, 1985.

Since the Big 12 began in 1996, Baylor is 0-23 against Top 10 teams with those losses coming by an average margin of 37 points.

The streaks continue, but Baylor showed promise this season, thanks in large part to the freshman Griffin.

Crabtree was hurt midway through the second quarter, when he jumped and pulled in a 6-yard pass between two Baylor defenders at the Bears 1.

He twisted his right ankle as he landed and hobbled to the bench. A few minutes later was taken to the locker room on a motorized cart.

He came out after halftime with a boot on his right foot and limped along the sideline, talking with teammates.

Crabtree has 93 catches for 1,135 yards and 18 touchdowns this season.

Baron Batch scored a touchdown on the play after Crabtree got hurt to put the Red Raiders up 14-13.

Top 25 Capsules

'Bama scores emphatic win over Auburn

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. (AP) — Already No. 1 in the nation, Alabama emphatically reclaimed the top spot in the state.

Glen Coffee rushed for 144 yards and a touchdown and Nick Saban's Crimson Tide snapped a six-year Iron Bowl losing streak with a 36-0 win over bitter rival Auburn on Saturday, the biggest margin in the series in 46 years.

The dominant win set the stage for Alabama (12-0, 8-0 Southeastern Conference) to face No. 2 Florida in the league championship game with a berth in the BCS national title game on the line.

Of more immediate concern for Tide fans, the state belongs to them again. And there was little question of that by the middle of the third quarter when a 10-0 game turned ugly — or beautiful, depending on the perspective.

The loss left Auburn (5-7, 2-6) shut out of a bowl game for the first time in nine years and cast another shadow on the decade-long tenure of coach Tommy Tuberville. Auburn, which had been 7-2 under Tuberville in the rivalry, has lost six of the last seven games

The Gators have won five in a row against Bobby Bowden's team, and this one was nearly as big a laugh as last season's 45-12 victory in Gainesville.

Florida scored on five of its first seven possessions, held the Seminoles (8-4) without a touchdown for the first 2½ quarters and again proved that the gap between the two programs is as wide as ever.

Kansas 40
No. 12 Missouri 37
KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Todd Reesing threw a touchdown pass to Kerry Meier with 27 seconds left.

The Tigers will still play for the Big 12 title, but they'll do so coming off a hard-fought loss to their border rivals.

The Jayhawks (7-5, 4-4 Big 12) led by 16 early in the third quarter, let Missouri (9-3, 5-3) back in it, then traded touchdowns with the Tigers in the fourth quarter before Reesing hit Meier.

Reesing finished 37-for-51 for 375 yards with two interceptions, throwing two touchdowns passes to Meier and one each to Dezmon Briscoe and Dexton Fields.

Missouri's Chase Daniel had 391 total yards and threw for four touchdowns, but also had two interceptions, a fumble and was sacked for a safety in the second quarter. Jermei Maclin had nine catches for 123 yards and a touchdown, and tight end Chase Coffman caught two touchdown passes for the Tigers.

No. 18 Georgia Tech . . . 45
No. 13 Georgia 42
ATHENS, Ga. (AP) — Georgia Tech had not beaten Georgia since 2000, and it wasn't looking good when the Yellow Jackets

trailed by 16 points at halftime.

Then Roddy Jones and the triple-option offense went to work.

Jones rushed a career-best 214 yards, including a decisive 54-yard touchdown midway through the fourth quarter, and No. 18 Georgia Tech rallied to snap a seven-game losing streak against its state rival.

The cold, rainy day wasn't a total victory for the visiting team: Virginia Tech denied the Yellow Jackets a spot in the Atlantic Coast Conference championship game with a 17-14 victory over Virginia.

But Georgia Tech (9-3) celebrated anyway, gathering in front of its small contingent at Sanford Stadium to sing the school fight song while the red-clad Georgia fans headed to the exits, a season that started at No. 1 winding down far short of expectations.

After building a 28-12 halftime lead, the Bulldogs (9-3) simply had no answer for Georgia Tech's unique offense, which piled up 409 yards on the ground. Jones, a redshirt freshman, averaged 16.5 yards per carry and scored twice, including the long run that gave Georgia Tech a 45-35 lead with 7:13 remaining.

No. 16 Cincinnati 30
Syracuse 10
CINCINNATI (AP) — With the Big East championship already in hand, No. 16 Cincinnati turned its final home game into a ho-hum win that matched a school record.

Tony Pike threw a pair of touchdown passes, and the Bearcats' senior-laden defense had its way Saturday in the Orange's final game under

headed to a BCS bowl — likely the Orange or Sugar — for the first time in their history. They clinched the spot when West Virginia lost at Pitt on Friday, taking the drama out of the last home game a day later.

The Bearcats tied the school record with their 10th win, the second straight season they've reached the mark. Cincinnati has a game left in Hawaii before heading to its bowl.

The Orange (3-9, 1-6) are headed for an offseason of change. Syracuse went 10-47 in Robinson's four seasons, including 3-25 in the Big East. He was fired on Nov. 16, effective the end of the season, and the Orange responded by rallying in the fourth quarter to beat Notre Dame 24-23 in South Bend last week.

No. 20 Boston College . 28
Maryland 21
BOSTON (AP) — Billy Flutie, the Boston College backup quarterback and nephew of Heisman Trophy winner Doug Flutie, threw for a 9-yard touchdown on a fake field goal Saturday to lead the 20th-ranked Eagles to a spot in the Atlantic Coast Conference championship.

BC (9-3, 5-3 ACC) will play Virginia Tech on Saturday — the second straight year the former Big East foes will play for the ACC's spot in the Orange Bowl.

Maryland (7-5, 4-4) fell to 4-1 against ranked teams this season and into a logjam of ACC teams seeking a secondary bowl berth — the conference has 10 teams competing for nine guaranteed spots.

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